



**Healthcare Provider Webinar**  
Middlesex and London Region  
October 17, 2023

# Welcome

Presenter:

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Middlesex-London Health Unit

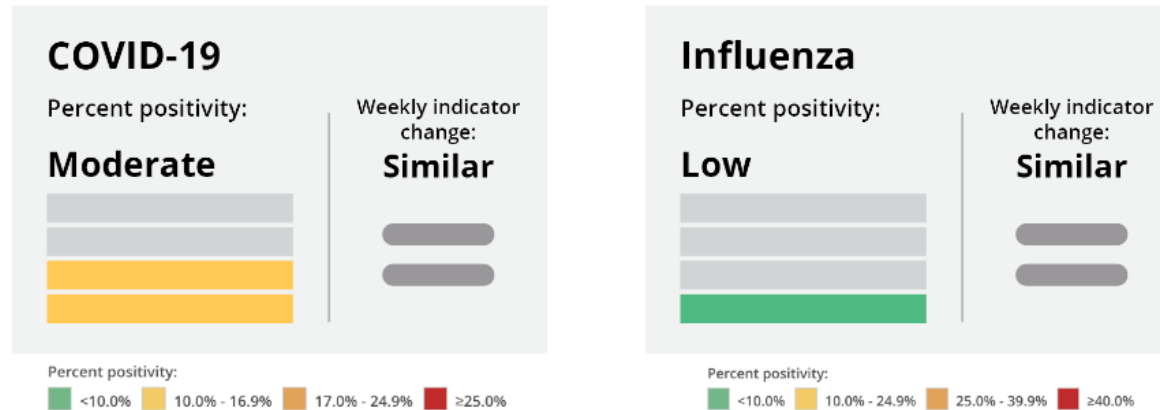
October 17, 2023

# Outline

- Respiratory virus activity
- Beginning of respiratory season (IPAC measures)
- Vaccine: COVID-19, Influenza, RSV
  - Availability, guidance, ordering
- Supports for the fall/winter respiratory season
- Rapid Antigen Tests
- PCR testing
- Antiviral treatments for COVID-19
- Adverse Events Following Immunizations (AEFIs)
- Baby-friendly practices workshops

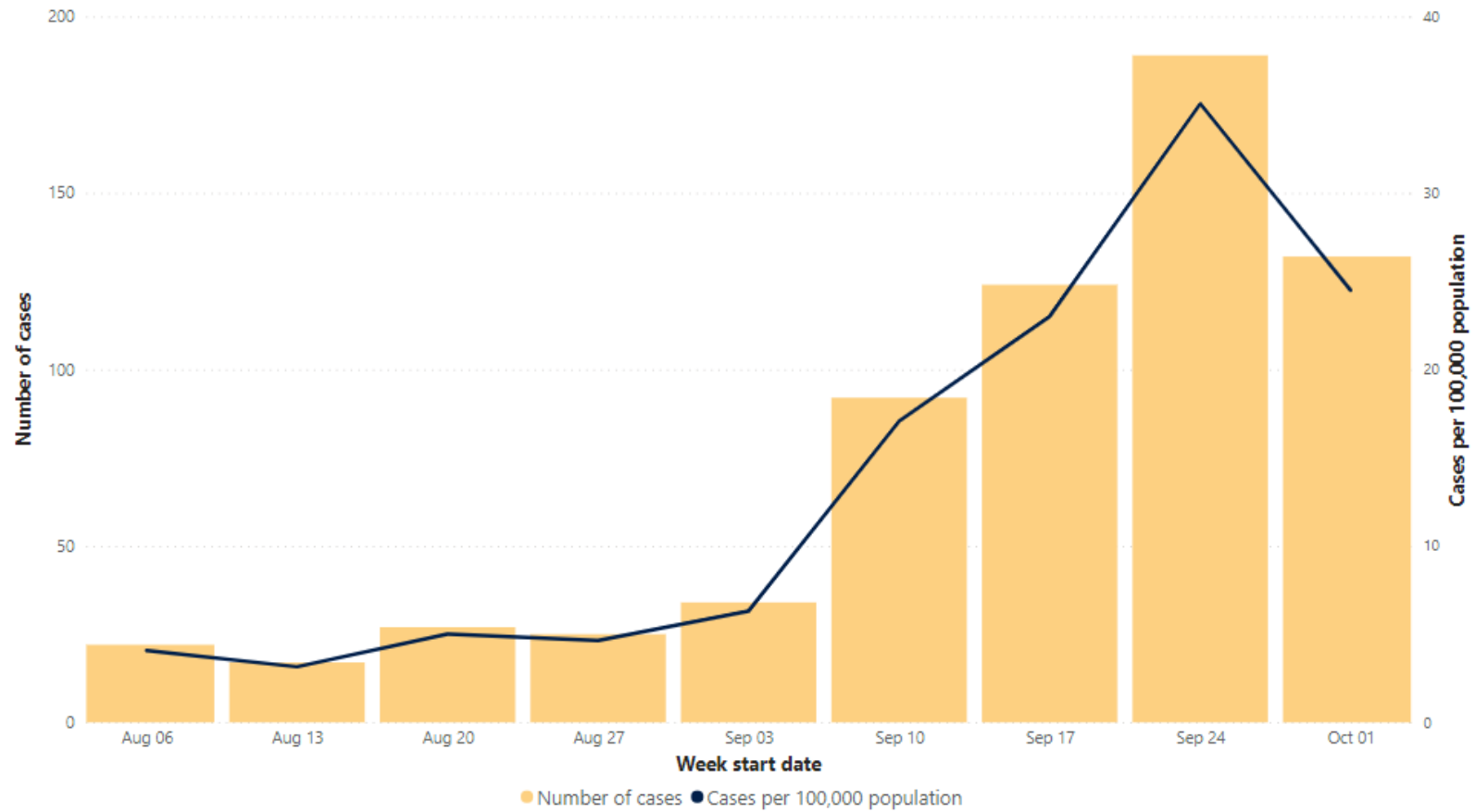
# Respiratory Virus Activity

October 1, 2023 – October 7, 2023



Respiratory virus activity	
Virus	Percent positivity (%)
Adenovirus	0.7%
COVID-19	16.3%
Enterovirus	14.8%
Human metapneumovirus	0.1%
Influenza A	0.3%
Influenza B	0.0%
Parainfluenza (all types)	1.2%
Respiratory syncytial virus	2.0%
Seasonal human coronavirus	0.2%

**Laboratory confirmed weekly case counts and rates of COVID-19 in Middlesex-London Health Unit**

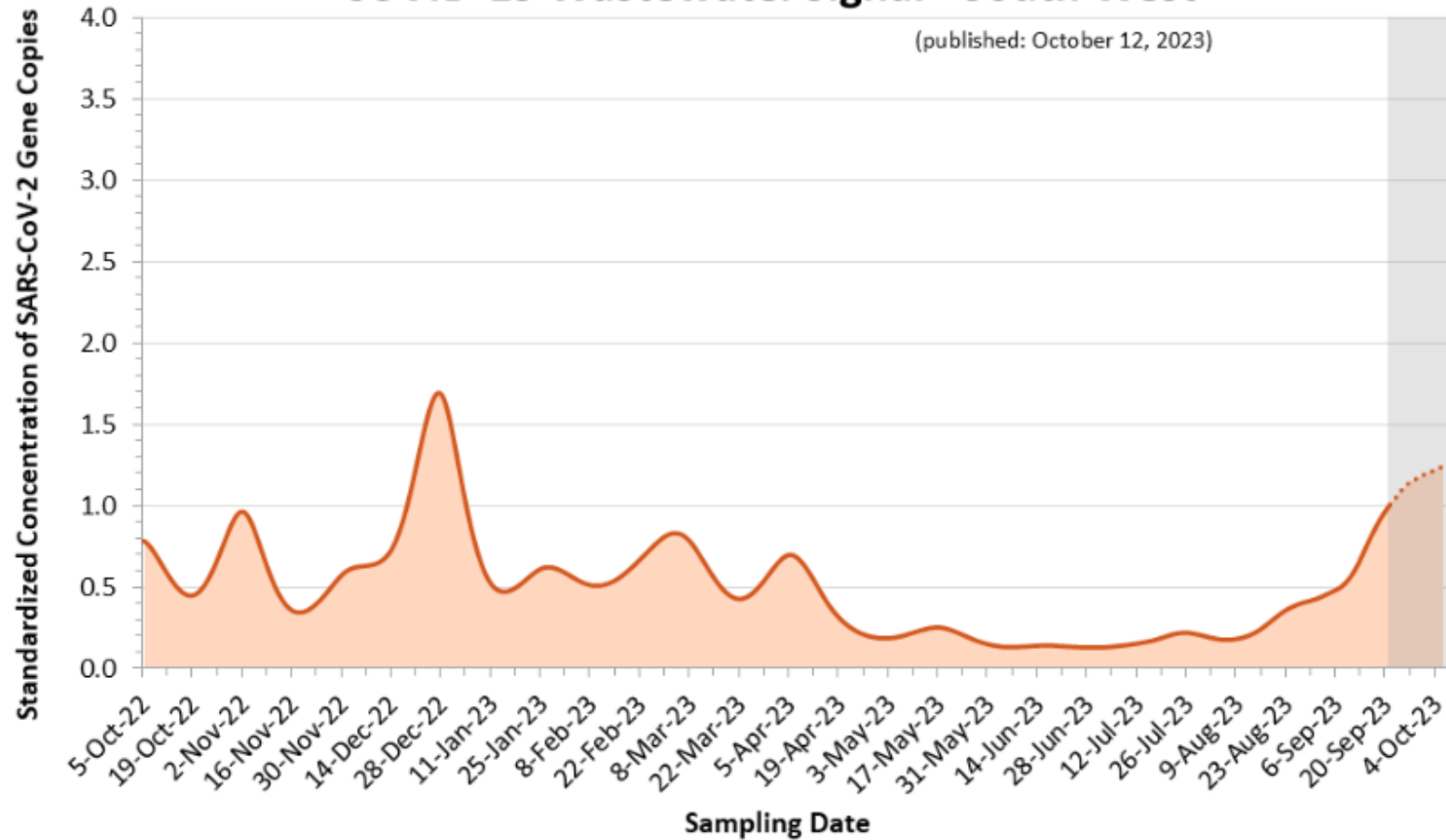


**Notes:**

COVID-19 and influenza cases are placed in time by reported date. For further details, please refer to the technical notes.

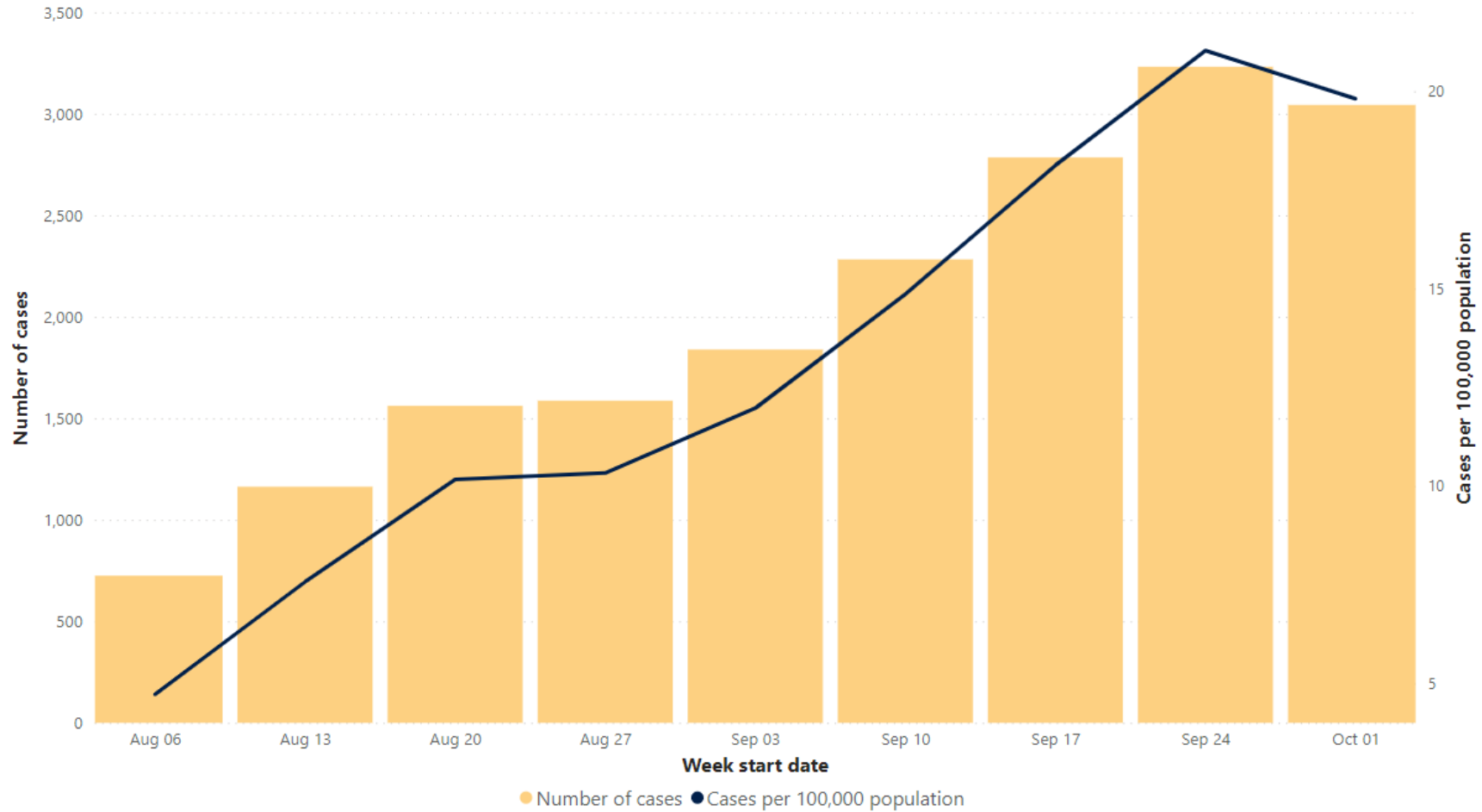
**Data source:** Public Health Ontario- *Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool*, extracted 2023-10-13. Data current as of the end of day 2023-10-13.  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Infectious-Disease/Respiratory-Virus-Tool>

## COVID-19 Wastewater Signal - South West



**Data source:** Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). COVID-19 wastewater surveillance in Ontario. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2023. Extracted 2023-10-13. Data current as of the end of day 2023-10-13. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Infectious-Disease/COVID-19-Data-Surveillance/Wastewater>

### Laboratory confirmed weekly case counts and rates of COVID-19 in Ontario



**Data source:** Public Health Ontario- *Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool*, extracted 2023-10-13. Data current as of the end of day 2023-10-13.  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Infectious-Disease/Respiratory-Virus-Tool>

# Beginning of Respiratory Season

**Table 1: Framework for Transmission Risk Periods**

Indicator	High Risk Period	Non-High Risk Period
Respiratory virus outbreaks in health care facilities	Frequent and ongoing	Infrequent or baseline
Hospitalizations and ICU admissions*	High and /or upward trajectory	Baseline and stable
Community transmission**	High and /or increasing	Low to moderate and stable

\*Secondary to acute respiratory virus infection. May include local or provincial context depending on organization. Metrics to consider as a proxy for disease severity include hospitalized cases or daily number of hospitalizations per 100 000 community population

\*\*Metrics to consider as a proxy for community transmission include:

1. Community positivity rates
2. Staff metrics including staff positivity rates and/or absenteeism
3. Wastewater surveillance trends

([Public Health Ontario, 2023](#))



# IPAC Recommendations

PHO's [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Measures Based on Respiratory Virus Transmission Risk in Health Care Settings](#)

- Please use this brief to inform your organization's IPAC measures during this high-risk period
  - routine practices
  - environmental controls
  - vaccination
  - screening

# MLHU's Current IPAC Measures

- Encouraging staff vaccination for both COVID-19 and influenza
- Passive symptom screening for both clients and employees
- Masking:
  - For employees experiencing infectious symptoms
  - For anyone who wishes to wear a mask
  - For all employees and clients in clinical areas
  - Beginning November 1: for those not up to date with COVID-19 and/or influenza vaccines

# COVID-19 Vaccine Availability

- The Health Unit is offering *Moderna and Pfizer Omicron XBB.1.5 subvariant* COVID-19 vaccine at its Western Fair vaccination clinic to [individuals at high-risk for influenza and/or COVID-19-related complications or hospitalization](#), health care workers, and first responders.
- Western Fair vaccination clinic hours:
  - Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Appointment booking:
  - [www.covidvaccinelm.ca](http://www.covidvaccinelm.ca) or
  - 226-289-3560 (Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

# Influenza Vaccine

- Available to:
  - [individuals at high-risk for influenza and/or COVID-19-related complications or hospitalization](#),
  - health care workers, and first responders
- As of November, available to:
  - all individuals who are six months of age and older
  - Please avoid planning large clinics until mid-November to ensure an adequate supply of seasonal influenza vaccine.
- HCPs can begin re-ordering influenza vaccine this week (for pick up the week of October 23<sup>rd</sup>) via PHOS (Public Health Ordering System)

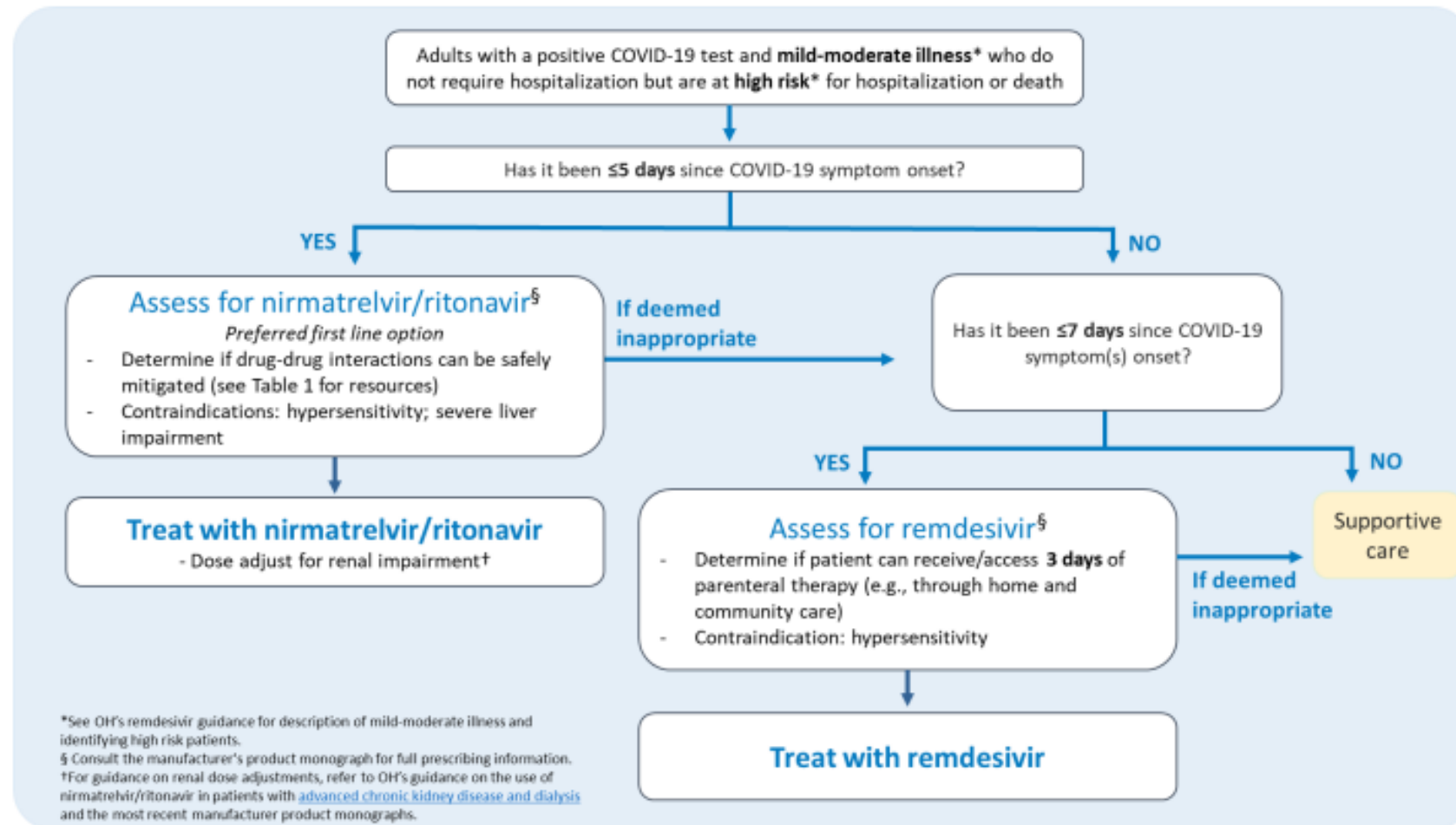
# RSV Vaccine (Arexvy)

- Publicly funded in Ontario (available mid-October) for individuals who are 60 +, and live in long-term care homes, Elder Care Lodges, and some retirement homes
- Administration:
  - single dose
  - 14-day period is required between receiving Arexvy and any other vaccine
- Option for patients who are 60+ years who do not qualify for publicly-funded vaccine to privately purchase Arexvy
  - Patients with a prescription from their HCP may obtain the vaccine from pharmacies, who are now able to order the vaccine at an approximate cost of \$250.00.
- **Will NOT be available** at MLHU clinics.

# Antiviral Treatments for COVID-19

- An important tool to address the upcoming respiratory illness season
- Ontario Health has developed two new resources to support their use:
  - [Recommendations on outpatient use of intravenous remdesivir \(Veklury\) in adults](#)
  - [Guidance on how to access antiviral treatments for COVID-19 \(nirmatrelvir/ritonavir \[Paxlovid\] and remdesivir\) in the community](#)

**Figure 1: Treatment Algorithm for non-hospitalized adults with COVID-19**



# Supports for the Fall/Winter Respiratory Illness Season

Ontario Health has released a [memo](#) with guidance on:

- Caring for Patients with COVID-19 and Other Febrile Respiratory Infections
- COVID-19, RSV and Influenza Vaccination
- COVID-19 Testing
- COVID-19 Treatment
- Information on Post-COVID-19 Condition (i.e., Long COVID)
- RSV Prophylaxis and Influenza Testing and Treatment
- Regional Support for Primary Care



# Distribution of Rapid Antigen Tests

- Under the Provincial Antigen Screening Program
- Ministry of Health [memo](#) contains further details
- More information about the expansion of the PASP:
  - please contact the Ministry at [PASP@ontario.ca](mailto:PASP@ontario.ca)

# Reporting AEFIs (Adverse Event Following Immunization) – Why?

AEFI: An unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine, which may or may not be caused by the vaccine. (Advise patients to contact you if they experience an adverse event after vaccination.)

- Passive vaccine safety surveillance relies on health care providers, vaccine recipients or their caregivers reporting AEFIs
- Important for rare adverse events that may not have been evident in clinical trials due to limited sample size.
- AEFI surveillance (also referred to as post-marketing or post-licensure surveillance).
- All AEFI reports received are investigated, assessed and documented according to provincial surveillance guidelines (required by the Ontario Public Health Standards).

# PCR Testing

Patients are eligible for PCR or rapid molecular testing if they have:

- [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and
- Belong to specified [groups](#)
  - Some groups are eligible for testing with or without symptoms

Provincial COVID-19 testing locations, including in London, Komoka and Strathroy can be found on the [Ministry's testing site](#)

# AEFI - Reporting Requirements and Process

- Physicians, nurses and pharmacists are required by law to report all AEFIs for all vaccines available for use in Canada to their local public health unit (Section 38 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act).
- Public Health Ontario's Adverse Events Follow Immunization Reporting for Health Care Providers in Ontario includes reporting steps, types of adverse events, and temporal criteria.
- For further AEFI information and to access the form: [MLHU's AEFI Webpage](#).

Vaccine recipients/caregivers may voluntarily report AEFIs to the Health Unit. In some cases, the Health Unit may need to reach out for additional information refer clients to their HCP for further investigation

# Baby-Friendly Practices Workshops

## One-day workshop for healthcare professionals:

- supplements key information from the [RNAO E-Learning Breastfeeding Course](#) through interactive, hands-on activities, and discussion
- supports best practices in the care of prenatal and postpartum women/persons and families around infant feeding
- Certified for up to 7 Mainpro+® credits
- Workshop dates: **November 8, and December 14, 2023**

Details and links to register: see the [downloadable poster](#)

To view other educational opportunities: see our [Educational Opportunities for Healthcare Providers](#) webpage.

# eNewsletters and Webinars

- eNewsletters will continue twice a month
- Webinars will continue monthly on the third Tuesday of the month. Upcoming dates:
  - [November 21](#)
  - [December 19](#)

# Thank you for joining us!

## Questions?

- Ask using chat function now, or after the webinar at:  
[healthcareproviders@mlhu.on.ca](mailto:healthcareproviders@mlhu.on.ca)
- For urgent matters please call the Health Unit's  
main line at **519-663-5317**
- For more information  
[www.healthunit.com/healthcare-providers](http://www.healthunit.com/healthcare-providers)



# References

Ministry of Health (2023) *Table 1: Use of Moderna XBB.1.5 mRNA COVID-19 vaccine*. [COVID-19 Guidance Document]. Retrieved from [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19\\_vaccine\\_administration.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19_vaccine_administration.pdf)

Ontario Health (2023) *Figure 1: Treatment Algorithm for non-hospitalized adults with COVID-19*. [Ontario Health Recommendations for Outpatient Use of Intravenous Remdesivir (Veklury) in Adults]. Retrieved from <https://www.ontariohealth.ca/sites/ontariohealth/files/Ontario%20Health%20Recommendations%20-%20Outpatient%20Use%20of%20Intravenous%20Remdesivir%20%28Veklury%29%20in%20Adults.pdf>