

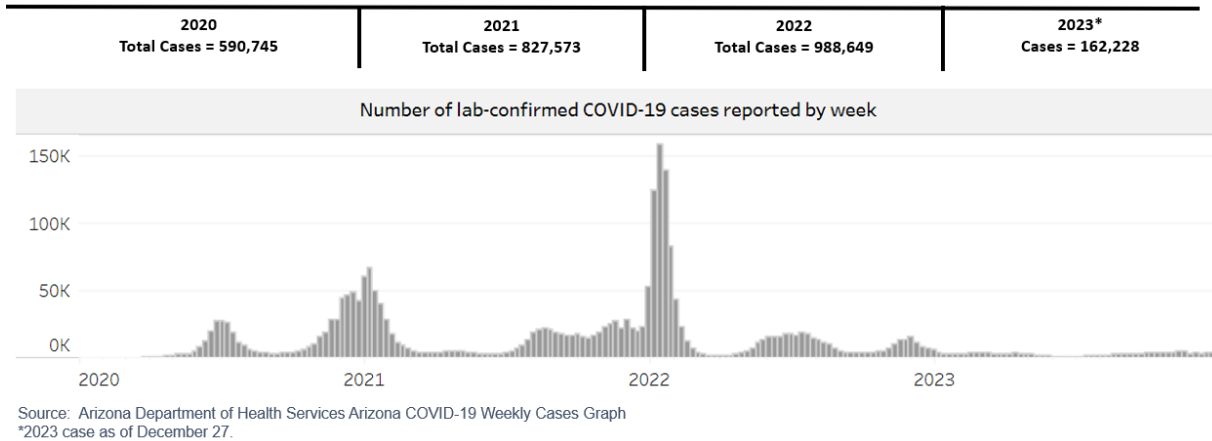
# Together We Thrive

## Arizona and COVID-19: Winter 2023

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It has been four years since COVID-19 first appeared in Arizona on January 22, 2020. The COVID-19 is in its endemic phase – it will be with us for a while. The new normal is low numbers of severe cases and deaths, and manageable hospitalization numbers. During the past fall, the case numbers have been low with weekly fluctuations (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Arizona Weekly COVID-19 Cases: January 1, 2020 to December 24, 2023



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the county numbers of COVID-19 hospitalization per 100,000 population for Pima County and most of Arizona were low for the week ending on December 23 (see Figure 3). Only, Mohave County had medium hospital admissions levels. The definition of low county number level of COVID-19 hospitalization per 100,000 population is below 10 admissions.

Figure 2. CDC COVID-19 Hospitalization per 100,000: Week Ending Dec 16, 2023

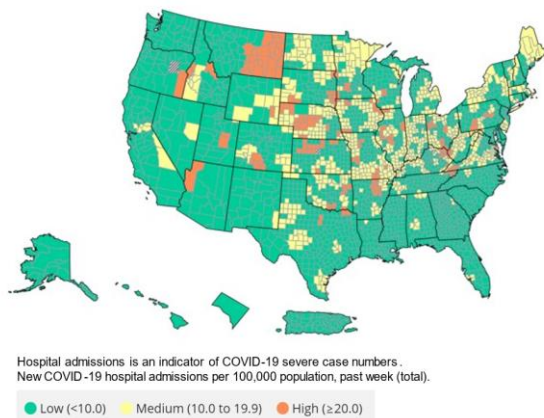
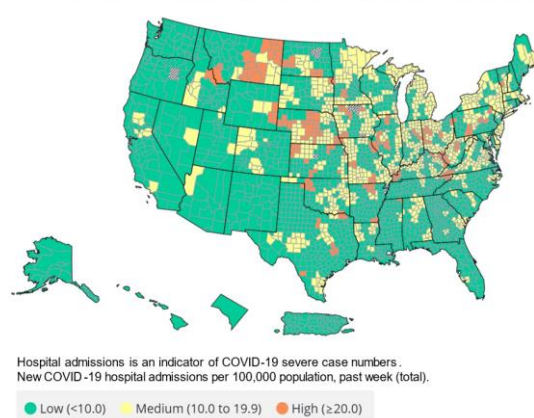


Figure 3. CDC COVID-19 Hospitalization per 100,000: Week Ending Dec 23, 2023



Most cases are *mild* (no symptoms) or *moderate* (sick, but can recover at home), and few cases are *severe* (require hospitalization and/or result in death). Arizona past four weeks COVID-19 case, hospitalization, and death numbers have been low (see Table 1).

Table 1. Arizona Total and Weekly Numbers of COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths

Date	Total Cases	Weekly Case	Total Hospital	Weekly Hospital	Total Deaths	Weekly Deaths
12-13-2023	155,188	3,487	20,098	498	1,649	50
12-20-2023	159,220	4,032	20,771	673	1,692	43
12-27-2023	162,228	3,008	21,234	463	1,718	26
01-03-2024	166,660	4,432	21,976	742	1,748	30

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Dashboard.  
 Arizona 2022 population estimate is 7,359,197, July 1, 2022 – U.S. Census Bureau

The Pima County cases have been low during the past four weeks (See Table 2).

Table 2. Pima County Total and Weekly Numbers of COVID-19 Cases

	12-13-2023	12-20-2023	12-27-2023	01-03-2024
Total Cases	29,553	30,177	30,612	31,272
Weekly Case	671	624	435	660

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Dashboard.  
 Pima County 2022 population estimate is 1,057,597, July 1, 2022 – U.S. Census Bureau.

After four years, we know what to do about COVID-19. You can reduce your risk of getting a severe case by keeping your immunity high and your exposure to the virus low. Staying healthy will keep your immunity high by eat healthy, exercise regularly, stay hydrated, reduce your stress, and get plenty of sleep/rest. During the respiratory disease season (e.g., COVID-19, flu, cold, RSV, and pneumonia), we need to practice preventative habits to reduce our exposure to viruses (e.g., maintain social distancing in crowds, wash hands frequently and thoroughly, wear multi-layer face mask in high COVID-19 risk situations, and avoid people who have COVID-19). If you are sick, you need to stay home.

The COVID-19 vaccine reduces the risks of getting a severe case, but you can still get the virus. Those who are immune compromised, have severe medical conditions, adult 65 and older, work in high-risk settings, and are obese have the highest risk of getting a severe case and need to get the updated COVID-19 vaccine (XBB1.5 monovalent) and flu shot. There is also an RSV vaccine available for adults 60 and older. You should check with your doctor, primary care provider, or pharmacist which vaccines you need to get.

There will be case fluctuations, but the numbers of severe COVID-19 cases and deaths in Arizona and Pima County remain low because of the high level of population immunity, the availability of drugs treating the virus, and most of the new cases are mild or moderate.

After 31 issues of the newsletter that began on April 8, 2020, this will be the last issue published. Below are the website links to COVID-19 statistics presented in the newsletter.

- Arizona number of lab confirmed COVID-19 cases reported by week graph: <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/data/index.php>
- CDC U.S. county hospitalization maps: [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#maps\\_new-admissions-rate-county](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#maps_new-admissions-rate-county)
- Arizona weekly case, hospitalization, and death numbers and Pima County case numbers: <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/data/index.php>

For the latest COVID-19 statistics visit the *Together We Thrive* website: [Together We Thrive COVID-19 Project \(togetherwethrivecovid19.com\)](https://togetherwethrivecovid19.com).

Be safe, and stay healthy, calm, and positive.