For more information on syndromic surveillance and the purpose of seasonal hazard reports, please see the last page of this report.

HOW TO READ THESE CHARTS
Visit counts for each week are color-coded in the charts to the right. Blue dots indicate normal visit counts. Yellow or red dots mean the counts for that week are higher than expected. A warning or alert does not necessarily indicate an event of public health significance. We are looking for sudden or sustained increases in visits.

TOTAL VISITS QUERY includes all visits to EDs and participating urgent care centers across the state. This query shows the total burden to the Oregon healthcare system and provides context for the queries and syndromes shown below.

Published: December 27, 2022

SUMMARY:
This report includes total daily counts of ED and urgent care visits in Oregon and visits for cold-related illness, falls, carbon monoxide exposures, and asthma-like complaints. This report includes data through December 26, 2022.

WHAT ARE YOU SEEING?
• Visits for falls remain elevated.
• No increases in total visits or visits related to cold-related illness, carbon monoxide exposure, or asthma.

Winter hazard-related visits can be associated with outdoor conditions, extreme weather events, or recreational activities. The charts below show visit counts matching each query. See the left sidebar for more information on how to read the charts.

TOTAL VISITS QUERY

FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that total visits at emergency departments and urgent care centers are currently at expected levels. We do see a one-day increase following a decrease in total visits over a holiday weekend.
FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that visits for cold-related illness have returned to expected levels. Hypothermia is caused by prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. It can happen at temperatures above freezing if one is wet or submerged in water. Frostbite may go unnoticed because the frozen tissue is numb. It is important to dress warmly and stay dry. If you detect symptoms of frostbite or one’s temperature is below 95ºF, seek medical attention immediately.

FALL SUBSYNDROME QUERY
looks for dozens of free text terms related to falls, including “slipped,” “tripped,” and “stumbled.” Importantly, this subsyndrome does not look for diagnosis codes.

FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that visits for cold-related illness have returned to expected levels. Hypothermia is caused by prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. It can happen at temperatures above freezing if one is wet or submerged in water. Frostbite may go unnoticed because the frozen tissue is numb. It is important to dress warmly and stay dry. If you detect symptoms of frostbite or one’s temperature is below 95ºF, seek medical attention immediately.

FALL SUBSYNDROME
looks for dozens of free text terms related to falls, including “slipped,” “tripped,” and “stumbled.” Importantly, this subsyndrome does not look for diagnosis codes.

FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that visits for falls have decreased after a recent peak, although they remain elevated. Winter weather can create slippery conditions, which in turn can lead to falls and other injuries.
CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) EXPOSURE QUERY

looks for the codes for the “toxic effect of carbon monoxide” (ICD-9 code 986 and ICD-10 code T58) and words related to CO poisoning.

FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that visits related to carbon monoxide (CO) exposure are at expected levels. CO exposure is preventable. Make sure to check your CO detector regularly or install one if you don’t have one. Have your furnace inspected yearly. Only use portable generators outside, more than 20 feet away from your home, doors, and windows, and never inside. Signs of CO exposure include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. If poisoning is suspected, seek fresh air and medical attention.

FALL SUBSYNDROME QUERY

looks for dozens of free text terms related to falls, including “slipped,” “tripped,” and “stumbled.” Importantly, this subsyndrome does not look for diagnosis codes.

FINDINGS
In this chart, we see that visits for asthma-like complaints are at expected levels. Winter hazards such as poor air quality, smoke from wood stoves, and air inversions can exacerbate asthma. Avoid outdoor activities when air quality is unhealthy.
SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE is the near real-time monitoring of key health indicators in emergency department (ED) and urgent care visits. Oregon’s syndromic surveillance project (Oregon ESSENCE) tracks the number of visits for specific patient symptoms using chief complaints (what the patient says is the reason for their visit) and discharge diagnosis codes. We look at symptoms associated with known health effects of seasonal hazards.

SIMILAR SYMPTOMS are grouped together into “syndrome” categories. For example, “wheezing” and “difficulty breathing” are grouped into the asthma-like query. By comparing the counts, we see against those we would expect to see, we can identify trends in visits.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF FALL AND WINTER HAZARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Health Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cold Temperatures & wintry precipitation | • Hypothermia  
• Frostbite                                      |
| Windstorms and Power Outage         | • Carbon monoxide exposure from grill or generator use near or inside the home  
• Stomach illnesses due to unrefrigerated food |
| Air Inversions and Poor Air Quality | • Exacerbated respiratory conditions, such as asthma |

SYNDROMIC COVERAGE by county is detailed in the map below.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA are now available in Oregon ESSENCE. Weather station data (temperature, precipitation, and wind speed) are from the National Weather Service. Air quality station data (PM 2.5 and ozone) are from EPA/Air Now.