

# TRIPLEDEMIC »»» RSV, INFLUENZA, AND COVID-19

## WHAT NURSES NEED TO KNOW

- » Rates of respiratory viral illnesses, including respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza, and Covid-19, are climbing across the United States. Many hospitals, including pediatric hospitals, are full.
- » Respiratory viral illnesses have similar symptoms and require testing to distinguish.
- » Both children and adults can experience serious illness or death with RSV, influenza, and Covid-19.
- » RSV, influenza, and Covid-19 are spread through aerosol or airborne transmission and contact transmission.
- » Previous infection with RSV, influenza, and Covid-19 does not guarantee protection from future infection. Vaccination offers some protection against hospitalization and death for influenza and Covid-19. There is no vaccine for RSV.

## PROTECTIONS FOR NURSES

Employers should follow the precautionary principle — that we do not wait for proof of harm before taking action to protect people’s health — and implement the highest protections during this tripledemic.

- » **Universal N95s and masking** — nurses should wear N95s for every patient encounter, based on the precautionary principle. All patients and visitors should wear face coverings.
- » **Optimal PPE** — when caring for a patient with any respiratory viral symptoms, nurses should wear the highest protection:
  - › A powered air-purifying respirator, but in no case should a health care worker be provided respiratory protection less protective than an N95 respirator
  - › Eye protection
  - › Isolation gown
  - › Gloves

For more information, visit: [nnu.org/tripledemic](https://nnu.org/tripledemic)

### Respiratory Viral Illnesses Have Similar Symptoms and Require Testing to Distinguish

SYMPTOMS	COVID	INFLUENZA	RSV
<b>Cough</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>Fever</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Often</b>	Sometimes
<b>Runny nose</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>Shortness of breath</b>	Sometimes	Sometimes	<b>Often</b>
<b>Body aches</b>	Sometimes	<b>Often</b>	Never
<b>Headache</b>	Sometimes	<b>Often</b>	Never
<b>Fatigue</b>	Sometimes	<b>Often</b>	Never
<b>Sore throat</b>	Sometimes	<b>Sometimes</b>	Never
<b>New loss of taste or smell</b>	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<b>Diarrhea</b>	Sometimes	Rarely	<b>Sometimes</b>

Sources: CDC, San Juan County Health & Community Services

**#ProtectNurses. All Our Lives Depend On It.**

