

# Transient decrease in pediatric bronchiolitis hospitalizations seen during pandemic

October 31 2023, by Elana Gotkine

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During the COVID-19 pandemic era, pediatric bronchiolitis hospitalizations decreased transiently, then increased, according to a study published online Oct. 26 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Kailey A. Remien, D.O., from Akron Children's Hospital in Ohio, and colleagues conducted a retrospective cross-sectional study using [data](#) from 41 U.S. [children's](#) hospitals in the Pediatric Health Information System database to analyze changes in patterns of bronchiolitis admissions for patients aged younger than two years admitted between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2023. Data were included for 400,801 bronchiolitis admissions among 349,609 patients.

The researchers found that during the prepandemic era, hospitalizations increased gradually, then decreased 69.2% in the 2020 to 2021 season and increased 75.3% in the 2022 to 2023 [season](#). Compared with the prepandemic era, [patients](#) in the pandemic era were older (median, seven versus six months).

From the prepandemic era to the pandemic era, there was a significant increase seen in intensive care unit admissions from 32.2 to 36.7%. During the pandemic era, the seasonality of bronchiolitis admissions changed, with admissions peaking in August 2021 (actual versus forecasted: 5,036 versus 943) and November 2022 (actual versus forecasted: 10,120 versus 5,268). In sensitivity analyses excluding children with complex [chronic conditions](#) and excluding repeat admissions, these findings were unchanged.

"The seasonality of bronchiolitis admissions does not yet appear to be stable, and U.S. hospitals should prepare for the possibility of atypical timing again in 2023," the authors write.

**More information:** Kailey A. Remien et al, Admissions for Bronchiolitis at Children's Hospitals Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.39884](#)

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