



## Maryland Cold-Related Illness Surveillance Report

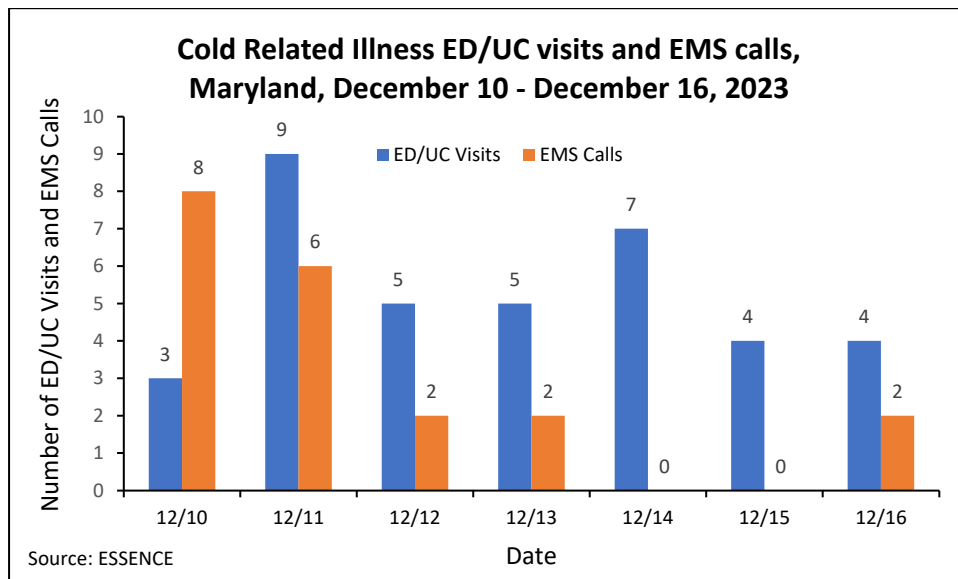
### Week of December 10 – 16, 2023 (MMWR Week 50)

Report Date December 20, 2023

### Background

The weekly Cold-Related Illness Surveillance Report is published from November through March. The report focuses on cold-related illness, carbon monoxide exposure and cold-related deaths in Maryland. Data is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) week.

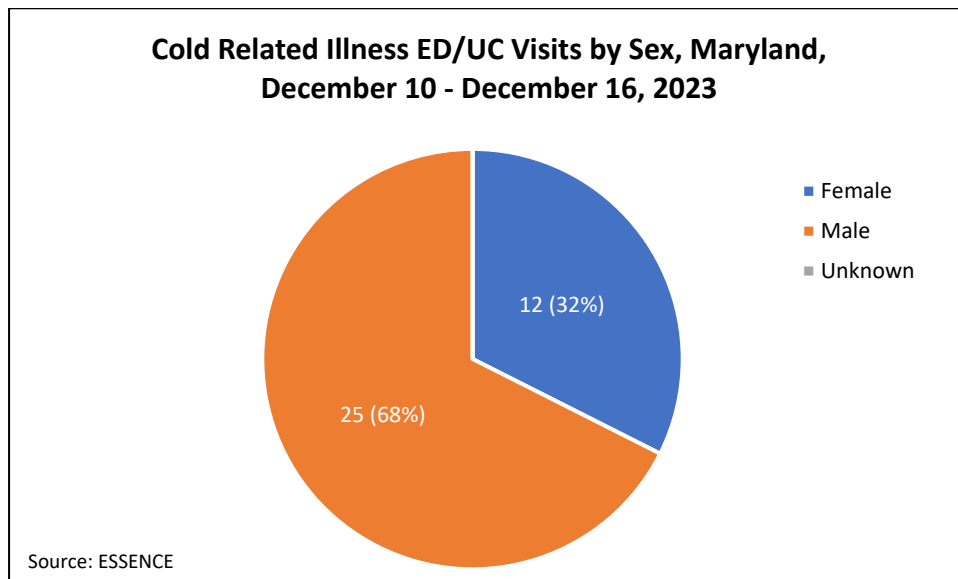
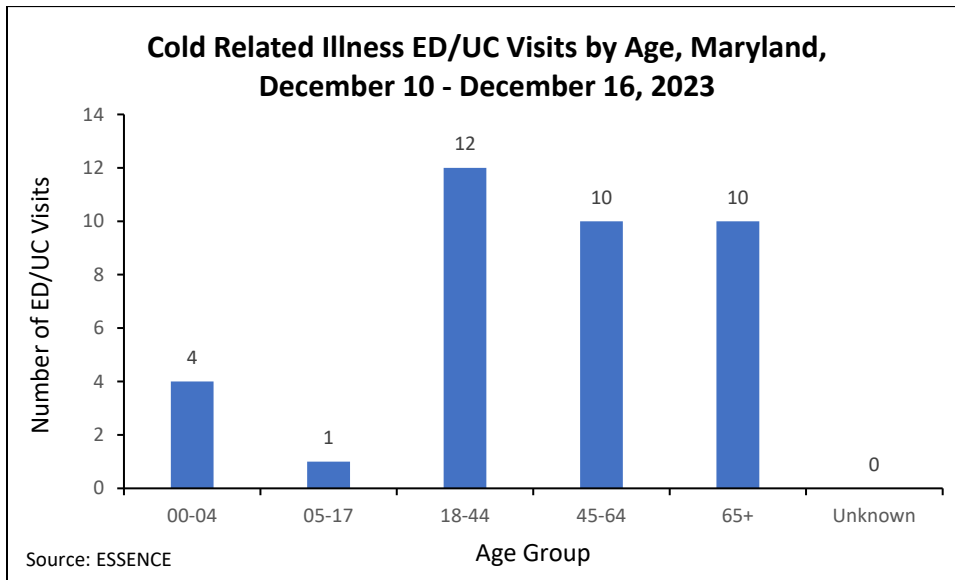
### Weekly Cold Related Illness



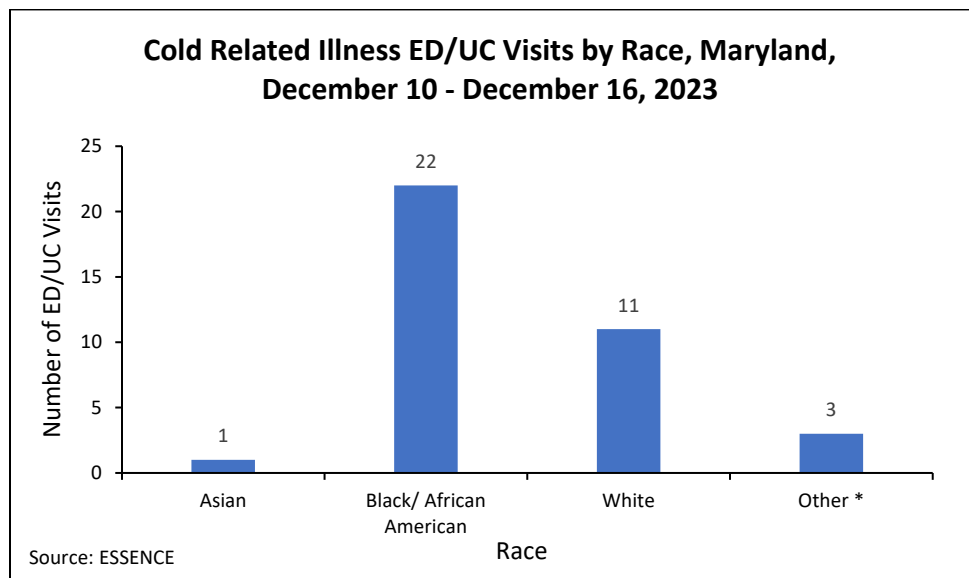
**Note on Emergency Department (ED) Data:** The results from the query used in ESSENCE, an electronic biosurveillance system, to track cold-related illnesses may be an overestimation of the actual burden of illness related to the cold weather. This overestimation is due to the nature of the query, which includes the term hypothermia and frostbite. As of November 2019, visit data from 23 urgent care centers are now included in ESSENCE emergency department visit data.

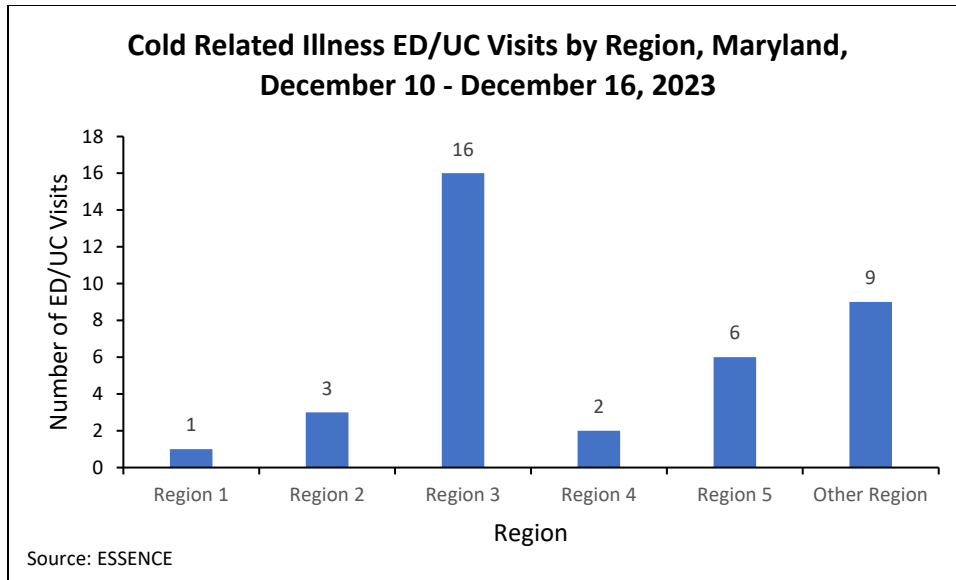
**Note on Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Data:** These data are based on EMS pre-hospital care reports where the EMS provider has selected hypothermia as a primary or secondary impression of a patient's illness. This impression is solely based on the signs and symptoms seen by the provider, not on any diagnostic tests. Since these numbers do not include all primary or secondary impressions that may be seen with cold exposure, the actual numbers may be low. These data are reported for trending purposes only.

**Note:** ESSENCE chief complaint query for cold-related illness contains the following terms: frostbite, frostnip, hypothermia, chilblain, and trench foot



\*Other includes American Indian/ Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander, Other, and Not Reported

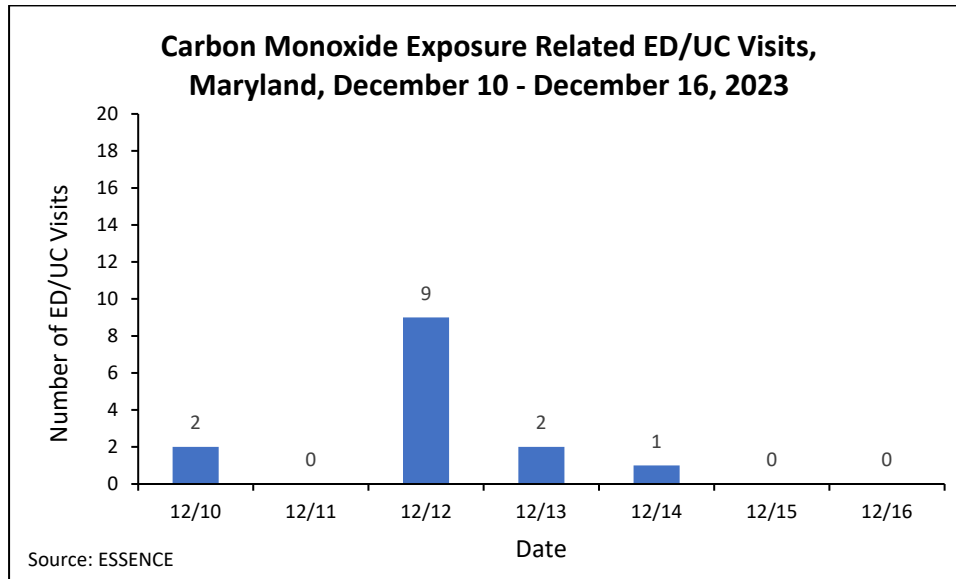




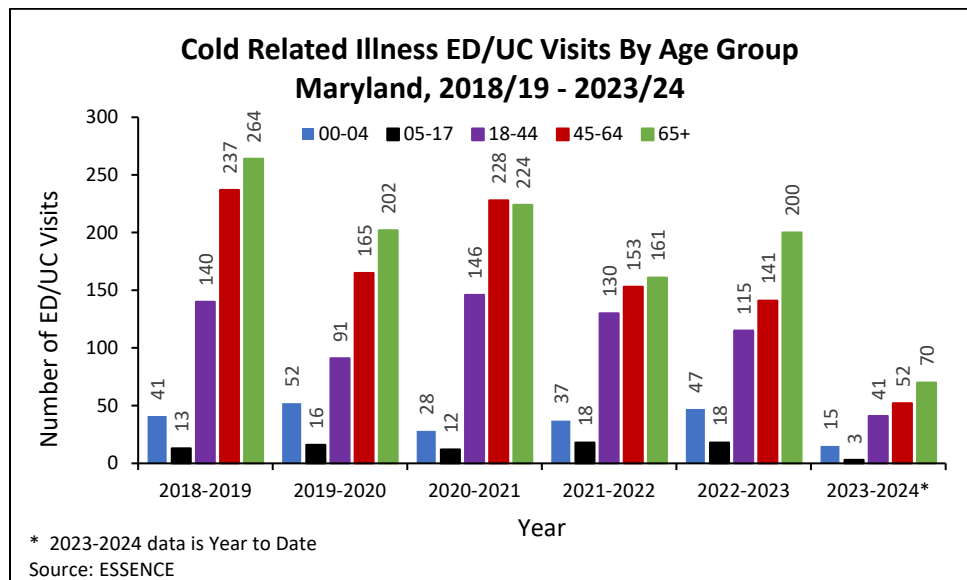
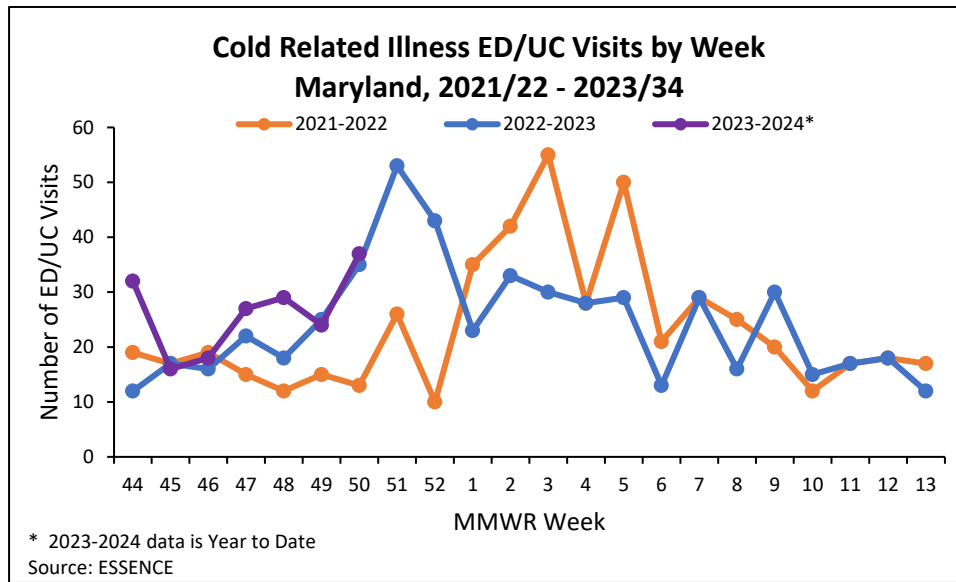
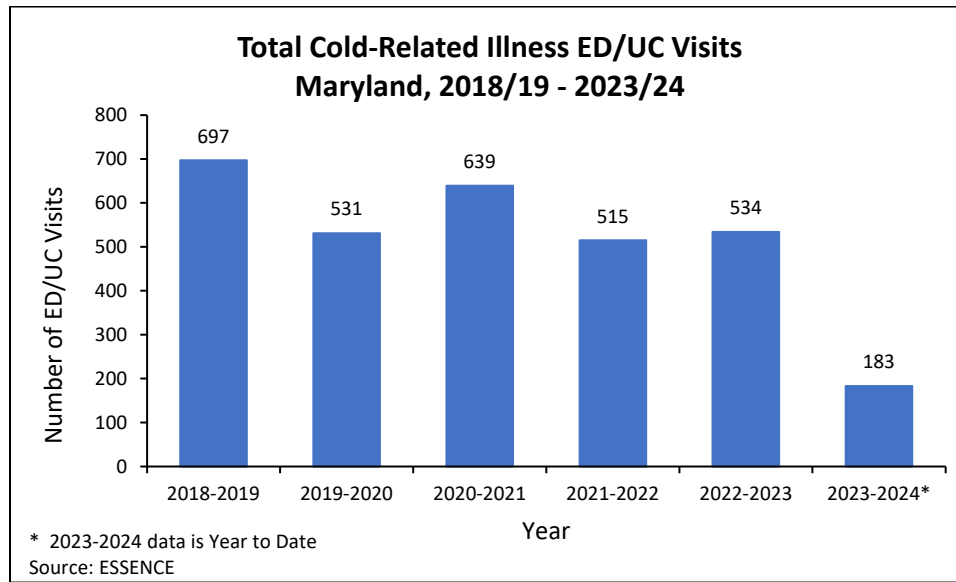
**Region 1:** Garrett and Allegany  
**Region 2:** Washington and Frederick  
**Region 3:** Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll, Harford, Howard  
**Region 4:** Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester  
**Region 5:** Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George’s, St. Mary’s  
**Other Region:** Patient without a ZIP code or resides outside of MD.

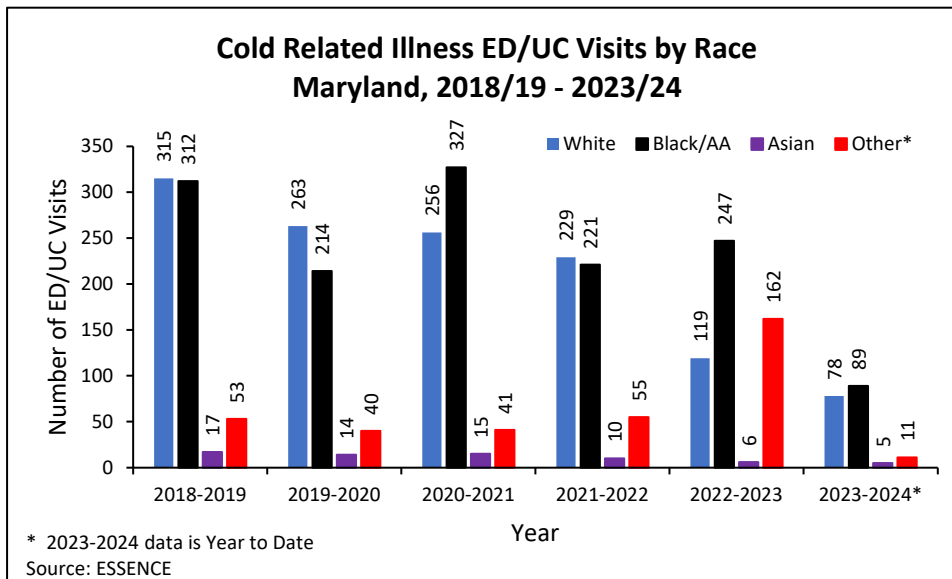
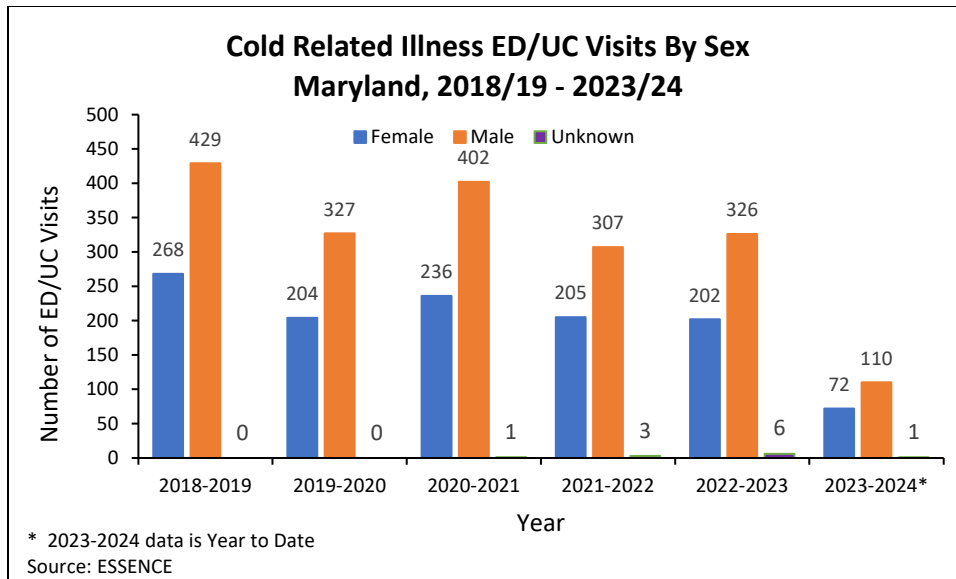
*Note: Geographical distribution of ED visits is based on patients' jurisdiction of residence.*

Use of alternative heating sources such as portable back-up generators can produce poison gas, carbon monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless gas that kills without warning. Warning signs of CO poisoning includes shortness of breath, headache, confusion, nausea, dizziness, and loss of consciousness.



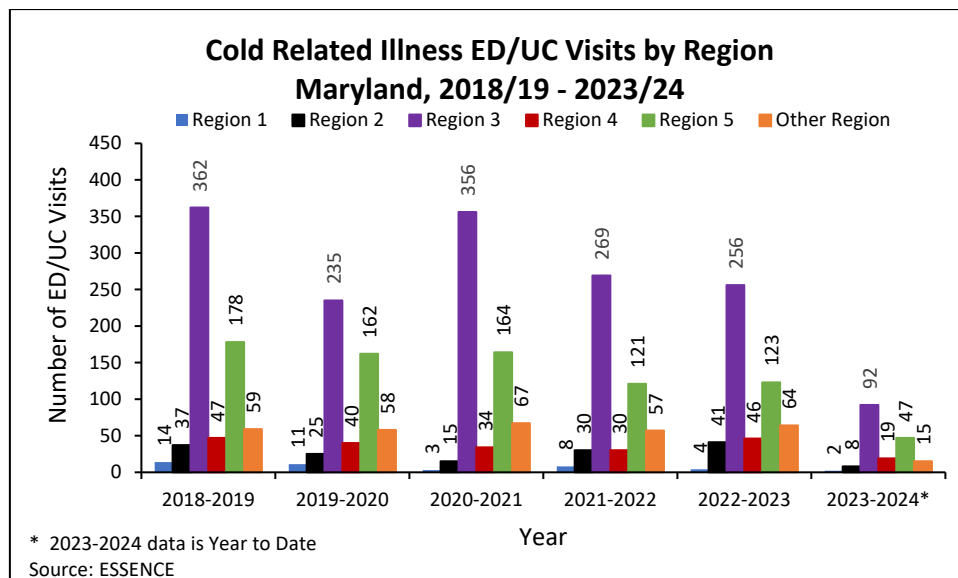
**Historical Cold Related Illness** (Note: 2023-24 data is Year to Date)





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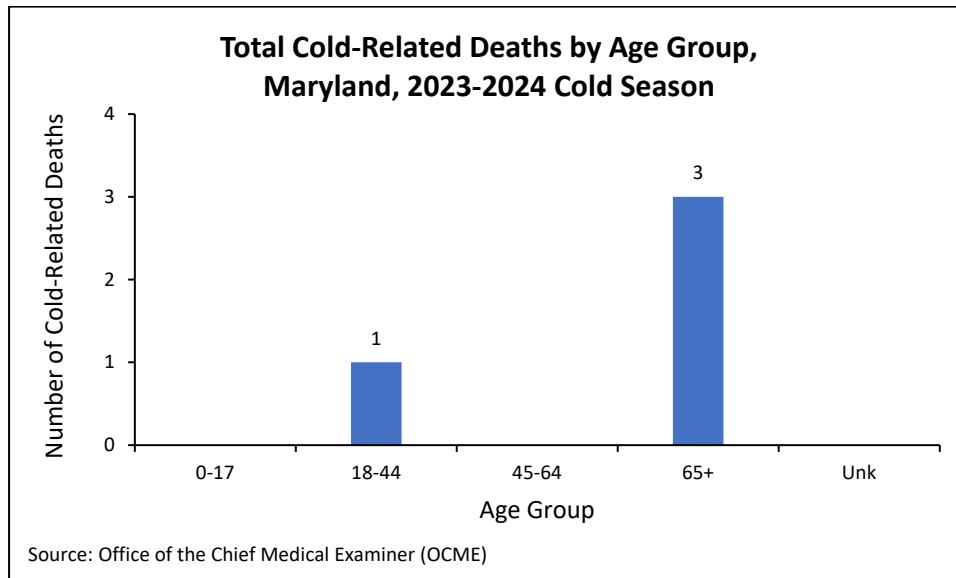
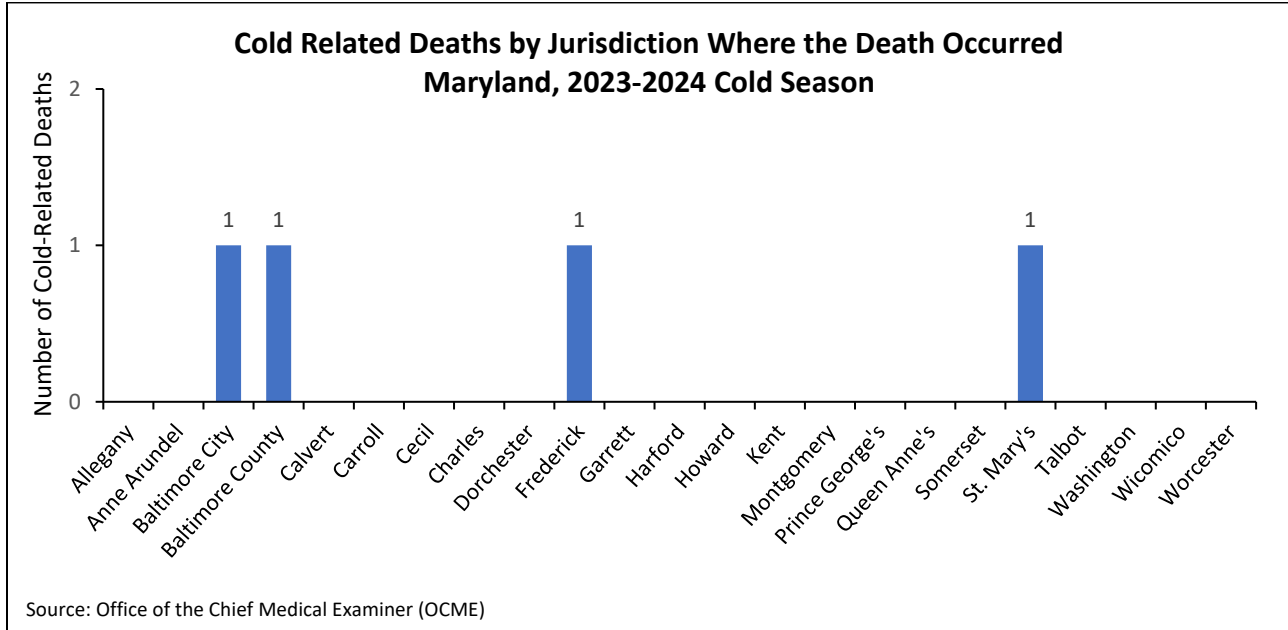


## Cold-Related Deaths

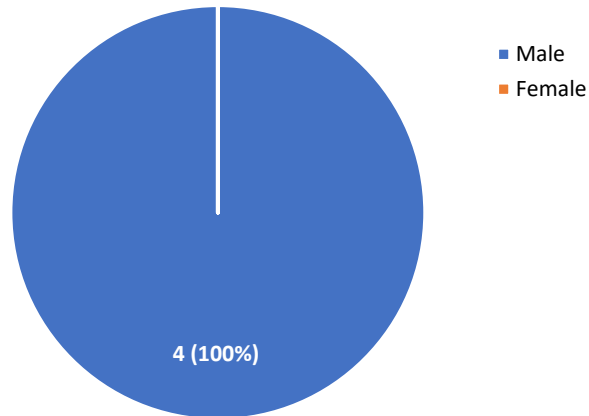
Total Reported Cold-Related Deaths This Season (November 1 – December 16, 2023): **4**

### Historical Total Reported Cold-Related Deaths

2018-2019 Deaths	2019-2020 Deaths	2020-2021 Deaths	2021-2022 Deaths	2022-2023 Deaths
58	50	64	44	51

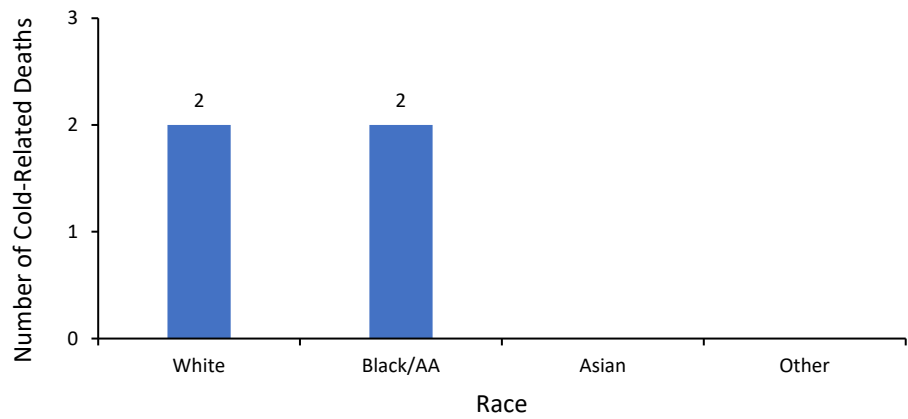


### Total Cold-Related Deaths by Gender, Maryland, 2023-2024 Cold Season



Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)

### Total Cold-Related Deaths by Race, Maryland, 2023-2024 Cold Season



Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)

## References

### ESSENCE

The Maryland Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) program is an electronic biosurveillance system that uses non-traditional data sources to quickly identify disease outbreaks and other patterns of illness.

### Data Sources

MDH analyzes chief complaints and discharge diagnoses of ED and UC visits to identify and monitor issues of public health concern across Maryland. The chief complaint is a free-text field capturing the patient's primary reason for seeking medical care as interpreted by the ED registration staff. The discharge diagnosis is a coded field that uses standardized values outlined by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) 10th Revision and SNOMED Clinical Terms (CT) code sets.

### Case Definitions

ED and UC visits for cold-related illness were identified based on the [Cold-Related Illness Syndrome Query](#) definition published by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) using Chief Complaint and Discharge Diagnosis.

For more information about extreme cold and emergency preparedness, follow the Office of Preparedness and Response on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

For media inquiries, please contact the Office of Communications: [410-767-6490](tel:410-767-6490)

#### Prepared by:

Office of Preparedness and Response  
Maryland Department of Health  
7462 Candlewood Rd  
Hanover, MD 21076

<http://preparedness.health.maryland.gov>