

IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 UPDATE

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COMPLETED
VACCINE SERIES
IN LOUISIANA

2,173,032*

*4,451,477 total doses
administered in Louisiana

FDA TO ALLOW MIX
AND MATCH FOR
COVID BOOSTER
SHOTS

The FDA is planning to allow Americans to receive a different booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine than initially vaccinated with. (Page 2)

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

Is there evidence of a heightened risk of becoming infected from COVID-19 for pregnant women?

Pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people. Having certain underlying medical conditions and other factors, including age, can further increase a pregnant or recently pregnant person's risk for developing severe illness.

Pregnant people with COVID-19 are also at increased risk for preterm birth (delivering the baby earlier than 37 weeks) and might be at increased risk for other poor pregnancy outcomes.

Pregnant and recently pregnant and breastfeeding people can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccinating pregnant people may also benefit their babies. Antibodies go from the mother's bloodstream to the placenta and then travel through the umbilical cord to the fetus. The antibodies may protect the baby for six months or more after birth. In addition, study has shown that mothers' antibodies make their way into breastmilk, likely protecting infants from COVID-19 for at least a few days after they consume the milk.

For more information on pregnant and recently pregnant people at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

BIDEN
ADMINISTRATION
UPDATES COVID-19
VACCINATION
PLAN FOR KIDS
AGES 5-11

The Biden Administration is preparing for the potential authorization of the first COVID-19 vaccine for kids ages 5-11. (Page 2)

WEEKLY COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

FDA to Allow 'Mix and Match' Approach for COVID Booster Shots



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is planning to allow Americans to receive a different booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine from the one they initially received, a move that could reduce the appeal of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine and provide flexibility to doctors and other

vaccinators.

The government would not recommend one shot over another, and it might note that using the same vaccine as a booster when possible is preferable, people familiar with the agency's planning said. But vaccine providers could use their discretion to offer a different brand, a freedom that state health officials have been requesting for weeks.

The approach was foreshadowed on Friday when researchers presented the findings of a federally funded "mix and match" study to an expert committee that advises the FDA. The study found that recipients of the single-dose shot of J&J who received a Moderna booster saw their antibody levels rise 76-fold in 15 days, compared with only a 4-fold increase after an extra dose of J&J.

Federal regulators this week are aiming to greatly expand the number of Americans eligible for booster shots. The FDA is expected to authorize boosters of the Moderna and J&J vaccines this evening. Last month the agency authorized booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to be administered at least six months after the second dose.

An advisory committee of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will take up the booster issue on Thursday; the agency will then issue its own recommendations. By the end of the week, tens of millions more Americans could be eligible for extra shots.

For more information on booster doses, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



Since taking office, President Biden has mobilized a whole-of-government effort to get Americans vaccinated and end the pandemic. Today, 2 in 3 eligible individuals – 189 million

Americans – are fully vaccinated. That's an increase from approximately 2 million reported when the president took office. The potential authorization of the first COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5-11, which is currently under consideration by the FDA and the CDC, would be another major milestone in our efforts to build on this historic progress and protect even more Americans.

In anticipation of the FDA's independent advisory committee meeting on October 26, and the CDC's independent advisory committee meeting on November 2-3, today the Biden Administration is announcing a plan to ensure that, if a vaccine is authorized for children ages 5-11, it is quickly distributed and made conveniently and equitably available to families across the country. The start of a vaccination program for children ages 5-11 will depend on the independent FDA and CDC process and timeline, but our planning efforts mean that we will be ready to begin getting shots in arms in the days following a final CDC recommendation. These steps will be critical in ensuring that we are staying ahead of the virus by keeping kids and families safe, especially those at the highest risk.

Millions of adolescents ages 12-17 have been safely vaccinated, and we know vaccines work. Fully vaccinated individuals are 10 times less likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 and have a high degree of protection, including against the Delta variant. The consequences of a pediatric COVID-19 case can be serious and potentially last months.

The Administration's plan will mobilize a comprehensive effort across the public and private sectors to ensure that we have the supply, the sites, and the support needed to get our nation's children vaccinated and protected against the virus.

Today, the Biden Administration is announcing the following steps:

- Securing vaccine supply for our nation's children
- Standing up vaccination sites in settings that kids and their parents know and trust
- Supporting education and engagement efforts to build public trust

To read more on President Biden's plan for COVID-19 vaccination for kids ages 5-11, visit [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov).

Louisiana COVID Hospitalizations Drop Below 400 for the First Time Since July

Tuesday marked the first day in Louisiana since July 8 that reported COVID hospitalizations dipped just barely below 400 at 399, per the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH).

LDH releases the latest data on COVID in Louisiana every day at noon. The data on hospitalizations represents the number of hospitalized COVID patients from the previous day.

The framing of hospitalizations between early July and now represents a fairly clear window into the rise and fall of COVID's fourth surge alongside the virus's particularly transmissible Delta variant.

While it seems like Louisiana has officially entered a downswing in case growth and hospitalizations, the number of new deaths reported Tuesday is 29. That pales in comparison to the peak in the fourth wave, with 177 new deaths reported on September 1. But it is the highest number since October 5, and stands above the average since July 8, which is roughly 28.

However, hospital capacities have greatly eased. Compared to the 3,022 hospitalized COVID patients on August 17, the 399 people currently hospitalized is an 86.80% decrease.

There are 61 people on ventilators as of today's report. On August 27, just two days before Hurricane Ida ravaged southeast Louisiana, the fourth wave peaked at 480 people on ventilators.

The lowest number of ICU availability now is 17.34% and the lowest number of regular beds available in the hospital is 21.71%.

On July 8, there were 409,806 COVID cases in Louisiana. Now there are 599,997 total cases. These past three-and-a-half months have accounted for almost one-third of all cases in Louisiana.

Just 46.7% of the state is fully vaccinated, compared to the recommended 75% to 95% herd immunity goal.

To see up-to-date data on COVID-19 information, visit covidvaccine.la.gov.



SERIES COMPLETED BY RACE:

- **White:** 58.37%
- **Black:** 30.27%
- **American Indian:** 0.38%
- **Asian:** 2.78%
- **Native Hawaiian:** 0.19%
- **Unknown:** 1.44%
- **Other:** 6.57%

SERIES COMPLETED BY AGE:

- **5-17:** 5.31%
- **18-29:** 12.47%
- **30-39:** 13.14%
- **40-49:** 13.84%
- **50-59:** 17.03%
- **60-69:** 19.26%
- **70+:** 18.92%

SERIES COMPLETED BY GENDER:

- **Female:** 54.23%
- **Male:** 45.5%
- **Unknown:** 0.27%

All breakdowns shown here are for Louisiana residents only. Race data completeness is expected to improve as we continue our outreach with vaccine providers.

Good Reads

Ochsner resumes pre-COVID visitation policies – This article talks about how Ochsner Health will resume pre-coronavirus visitation policies due to COVID cases falling across the state.

Read more at wdsu.com.

Why COVID boosters weren't tweaked to better match variants – This article talks about why the booster doses match the original vaccine formula and why we haven't updated them to combat the Delta variant.

Read more at theadvocate.com.

Here are the states with colder weather that are seeing an increase in COVID-19 cases – This article talks about how northern and midwest states are starting to see an uptick in COVID cases as the weather gets colder.

Read more at wdsu.com.