

IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 UPDATE

ISSUE NO 24 | JULY 21, 2021



QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

Will I need a COVID-19 booster shot?

Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 will help protect you for the near future, but it's still not clear how long protection will last. We don't yet know whether COVID-19 booster shots will be needed, or at what intervals.

CDC is updating guidelines as they learn more about how long vaccines protect against COVID-19 in real-world conditions.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccine booster doses, visit [cdc.org](https://www.cdc.org).



VACCINE DOSES
ADMINISTERED IN
LOUISIANA

3,407,099

LOCAL SCHOOLS
RETHINK COVID-
19 PLANS AFTER
NEWLY RELEASED
CDC GUIDELINES

Local schools are rethinking their COVID-19 plans for reopening after the CDC released new guidelines for schools. (Page 2)

COVID-19
INFECTION
INCREASES IN
LOUISIANA

Due to the Delta variant, COVID cases in Louisiana are growing exponentially. (Page 2)

WEEKLY COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

Here is an overview of major updates that occurred over the week.

Local Schools Set to Rethink COVID-19 Plans After CDC Updates Guidelines

On Friday, July 9, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released new guidelines for schools reopening across the country, causing local schools to rethink their plans for the upcoming school year.



The theme of the new CDC guidelines is an emphasis on flexibility. Recommended prevention strategies still include masking and physical distancing, but the latest report tells schools to create their COVID-19 prevention strategies by working with local public health officials and assessing the COVID-19 data in the area. The CDC said the main factors to take into account are:

- Level of virus transmission
- Vaccination coverage among students, teachers, and staff
- Availability of frequent COVID-19 testing
- Outbreaks
- The ages of children being served at the school

The CDC also said that if school administrators should reduce prevention strategies, they should do so one at a time to watch for any increases in COVID-19 transmission.

To read more about CDC guidance for COVID-19 prevention in schools, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Substantial Increases in COVID-19 Transmission Throughout Louisiana

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is issuing an advisory to alert clinicians of substantial increases in COVID-19 transmission throughout Louisiana.

This increasing transmission is attributable to the widespread circulation of the Delta (B.1.617.2) SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern. The Delta variant is highly transmissible and is now the dominant lineage circulating throughout the U.S. CDC estimates that Delta accounts for nearly 60% of the circulating SARS-CoV-2 lineages in the South Central U.S. region that includes Louisiana.

In addition, the current proportion of Louisiana's population that has been fully vaccinated is currently 36%, whereas the proportion of the overall U.S. population that has been fully vaccinated is 48%. Because of the increasing circulation of the Delta variant in the context of comparatively low vaccination rates, COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, emergency department visits, and outbreaking in Louisiana are all increasing:

- The number of new cases diagnosed each day has been increasing for the past 28 days and is now increasing in all nine regions of the state. The statewide average daily number of cases per 100,000 residents has increased 167% over the past 14 days.
- Statewide percent positivity of new COVID-19 tests conducted is now 6.3% and has been increasing for the past four weeks.
- The number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 throughout Louisiana has been increasing for the past 13 days, with more than 200 additional hospitalized patients added during that time.
- The number of emergency department visits related to COVID-like illness has been significantly increasing throughout the state over the past 14 days.
- During the past week, 35 new outbreaks and 200 new outbreak-associated cases have been identified. This represents a 169% increase in the number of reported outbreaks and a 96% increase in the number of outbreak-associated cases compared to the previous week.

To read the full LA HAN 21-51, visit [covidvaccine.la.gov](https://www.covidvaccine.la.gov).

Here's How Well COVID-19 Vaccines Work Against the Delta Variant

The United States is now dealing with the Delta variant of the coronavirus, a highly contagious variant that was first identified in India in December 2020.

As with previous variants, the Delta variant has spread to many countries across the world, including, most notably, the United Kingdom, where it's now responsible for around 99 percent of new cases.

The United States first announced that it had diagnosed a case with the Delta variant in March this year. It is now the dominant variant nationwide, making up more than half of all new infections in the country.

Confirmed infections with the Delta variant have also been doubling since June. The average is more than 24,000 a day, according to data from the CDC.

This rise has been attributed, in part, to the Delta variant being an estimated 60% more transmissible than the Alpha variant, according to recent research. Additionally, areas with low vaccination rates are more likely to see a surge in infections.

Vaccines Vs. Delta Variant

All three vaccines are proven to be effective in varying degrees against the original variant of the coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, that causes COVID-19.

However, since the Delta variant emerged, scientists have been trying to establish whether these vaccines are as effective against it.

Here's what the current data says. Please note: As new research emerges, the data can change over time.

Estimated Effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine

Anywhere from 64% to 96% effective against the Delta variant with two doses.

Due to limited research so far, trying to determine the effectiveness of each vaccine against the Delta variant remains a challenge. However, there have been promising results from multiple studies.

Pfizer- BioNTech says they're now in the process of developing a third dose of their COVID-19 vaccine that will act as a booster against the Delta variant.

Estimated Effectiveness of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

One study estimates 72% effectiveness from one dose. Other studies suggest it may offer similar protection as the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

There are multiple lab studies that suggest the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine works against the Delta variant. And similar to Pfizer, Moderna is also testing whether a third dose is beneficial.

Estimated Effectiveness of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine

More Studies are needed to reach a definitive answer.

There's little data that shows how effective the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) single-shot COVID-19 vaccine is at protecting against the Delta variant. The company is also reporting researching whether a second shot would boost immunity against the variants.

To read more about the vaccine studies, visit [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com).

LOUISIANA COVID-19 VACCINE DEMOGRAPHICS

SERIES COMPLETED BY RACE:

- **White:** 58.62%
- **Black:** 29.03%
- **American Indian:** 0.33%
- **Asian:** 3.0%
- **Native Hawaiian:** 0.21%
- **Unknown:** 1.64%
- **Other:** 7.16%

SERIES COMPLETED BY AGE:

- **5-17:** 2.51%
- **18-29:** 10.42%
- **30-39:** 11.7%
- **40-49:** 13.07%
- **50-59:** 17.64%
- **60-69:** 21.95%
- **70+:** 22.7%

SERIES COMPLETED BY GENDER:

- **Female:** 55.18%
- **Male:** 44.55%
- **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

A 'statewide outbreak' in Louisiana: COVID cases soar as vaccination rates stall – This article talks about how COVID-19 is again on the rise in Louisiana as state officials urge residents to get vaccinated.

Read more at theadvocate.com.

The debate begins over the timeline for COVID vaccine boosters – This article talks about the future of COVID vaccine boosters.

Read more at [axios.com](https://www.axios.com).

Louisiana health officer concerned about Fauci's 'get over it' remarks – This article talks about how Dr. Joe Kanter thinks you should never dismiss someone's concern for getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Read more at [audacy.com](https://www.audacy.com).