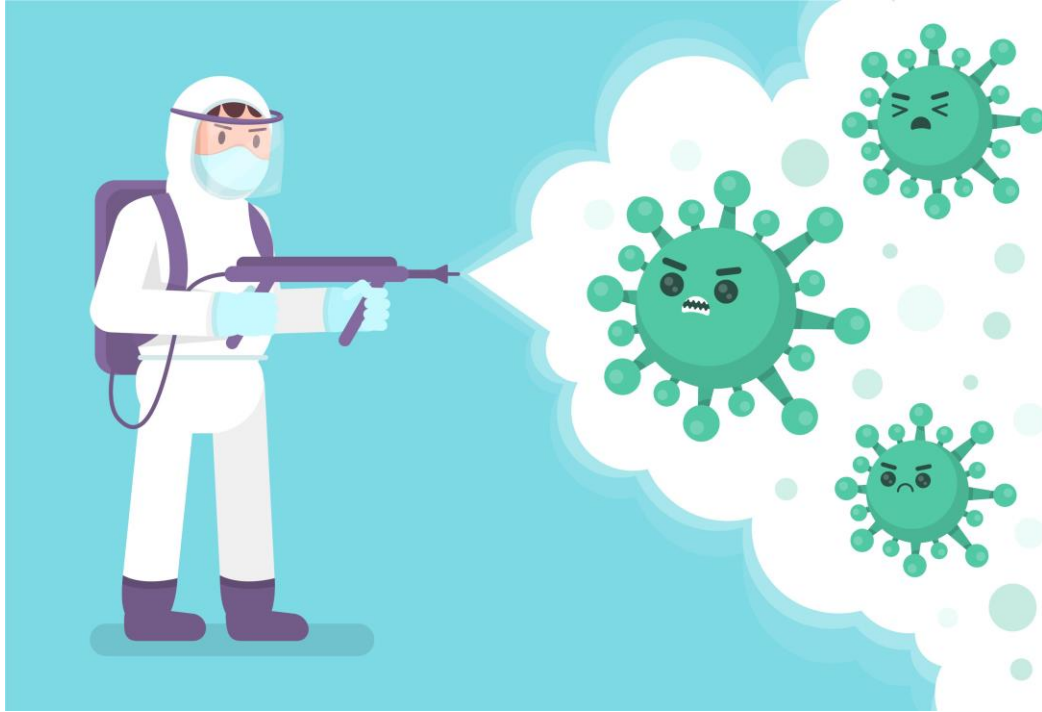


IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 UPDATE

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COMPLETED
VACCINE SERIES
IN LOUISIANA

2,420,088*

*4,972,238 total doses
administered in Louisiana

UPDATED COVID-19
VACCINATION
PRIMARY SERIES
SCHEDULE

CDC updates Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccination schedule for optimal benefits to individual patients. (Page 2)

CDC INTRODUCES
NEW COVID-19
COMMUNITY LEVELS
TOOL

CDC launches new online feature with community-specific COVID-19 data and recommendations. (Page 3)

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

With many states and counties dropping mask mandates for COVID-19, what is the most up-to-date guidance for using or not using a mask?

It is correct that several states have eliminated mask mandates as the number of reported coronavirus cases dips to its lowest level since December.

Although CDC has updated its guidance for mask use based on individual community levels of COVID-19, the agency continues to urge mask use as a means to reduce transmission of the coronavirus.

For its latest guidance, CDC is now categorizing every county into low, medium and high community levels of COVID-19 [here](#). Just type in your state and county to see the level.

The Louisiana Department of Health offers these recommendations: wear the most protective mask you can when at indoor public spaces, at indoor private gatherings if members outside of your household are present, and outdoors if social distancing cannot be maintained. Get vaccinated and boosted, if eligible. Stay home and get tested if you are sick.

WEEKLY COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

Updated COVID-19 Vaccination Primary Series Schedule

Following a thorough evaluation of the latest safety and effectiveness data, CDC has released new information to help healthcare providers recommend the optimal COVID-19 vaccination schedule based on the individual patient.

- This updated guidance is specific to the mRNA (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) COVID-19 vaccine primary series and is only for some patients who have not yet completed their two-dose primary vaccine series.
- Some people may benefit from getting their second mRNA COVID-19 vaccine dose eight weeks after their first dose, instead of after the FDA-approved or FDA-authorized three-week (Pfizer-BioNTech) or four-week (Moderna) interval. This applies to the following not yet fully vaccinated people:
 - People ages 12 through 64 years, particularly males ages 12 through 39 years, AND
 - People who are not or not moderately or severely immunocompromised

Potential Benefits

The potential benefits of this extended interval are two-fold:

- **Stronger immune response:** Data show that a longer interval between the first and second doses may give the body a chance to build a stronger immune response, increasing the effectiveness of these vaccines.
- **Further minimization of the rare risk of adverse events:** New studies have shown the small risk of myocarditis and pericarditis associated with mRNA COVID-19 vaccination—mostly among males between the ages of 12 and 39 years—might be reduced with a longer interval.

Patients who meet these criteria and have already received their primary mRNA series at the three-week (Pfizer-BioNTech) or four-week (Moderna) interval remain well-protected—especially if they have received a booster dose—and do not need to repeat any doses.

Clarifications

The extended interval is not recommended for all people ages 12 through 64 years, and there are situations where providers should continue to recommend the three-week (Pfizer-BioNTech) or four-week (Moderna) intervals between primary doses. These include:

- When there is concern about high levels of community transmission
- Among people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, including those with a genetic mutation or a disease, such as HIV, that causes a loss of immune function; and those who take certain medications, including immunotherapy, to treat specific diseases
- In addition, the extended interval is not recommended for anyone age 65 years or older.

Table: The COVID-19 vaccination primary series schedule for the general public (individuals not immunocompromised), with updates highlighted:

Primary vaccination	Age Group	Number of primary and/or additional vaccine doses	Number of booster doses	Interval between 1st and 2nd dose	Interval between primary series and booster dose
Pfizer-BioNTech	5-11 years	2	N/A	3 weeks	N/A
Pfizer-BioNTech	>12 years	2	1	3-8 weeks*	>5 months
Moderna	>18	2	1	4-8 weeks*	>5 months
J&J Janssen	>18	1	1	N/A	>2 months

*An **eight-week** interval may be optimal for people ages 12 years through 64 years, and especially for males ages 12 through 39 years, who are not moderately or severely immunocompromised. A **shorter interval** (three weeks for Pfizer-BioNTech; four weeks for Moderna) between the first and second dose remains the recommended interval for: people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised; adults age 65 years and older; and others who need early protection due to increased concern about community transmission or risk of severe disease.

New reports on health and well-being of children during COVID-19 pandemic

Two recently published reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveal trends in pediatric emergency department visits during COVID-19.

The first study, "[Pediatric emergency department visits before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)," examined

COVID related and non-COVID related pediatric visits. The

researchers found a decrease in overall pediatric visits in 2020, 2021, and January

2022

when compared to 2019. In addition, COVID-19 was the leading cause for pediatric visits during the period studied, while "visits for other respiratory illnesses mostly declined."

Regarding the study, researchers noted, "Health care providers and families should remain vigilant for potential indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including health conditions resulting from delayed care, and increasing emotional distress and behavioral health concerns among children and adolescents."

The second study, "[Pediatric emergency department visits associated with mental health conditions before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)," found an increase in emergency department visits among

adolescent females ages 12 to 17 for mental health conditions during 2020, 2021, and January 2022 when compared to 2019. In 2020, emergency department visits increased for eating and tic disorders. In 2021, emergency department visits increased for depression, eating, tic, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Lastly, in January 2022, emergency department visits increased for anxiety, trauma and stressor-related matters, eating, tic, and obsessive-compulsive disorders.

The researchers noted, "Early identification and expanded evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies are critical to improving pediatric mental health, especially among adolescent females who might have increased need."



CDC introduces new tool to report community levels and recommendations

The CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) is a new online tool that provides the latest parish/county level data that communities can use to determine what prevention measures to take.

The tool generates three levels—low, medium, or high— by evaluating the number of hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area.

Community Levels also aligns precautions for educational settings with those for other community settings.

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautionsStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wear a mask indoors in publicStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptomsAdditional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness

People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.

New recommendations to prioritize contract tracing

On Feb. 28, CDC released recommendations to assist state, tribal, local and territorial (STLT) health departments in prioritizing COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing activities.

- Universal case investigation and contact tracing are not recommended for COVID-19.
- Health department jurisdictions should prioritize specific settings and groups at increased risk.
- Case investigation and contact tracing are separate processes with distinct benefits and goals; decisions to initiate either should be made separately.
- Investigations should focus on COVID-19 cases and close contacts with onsets and exposures in the previous five days for those settings and groups at increased risk.
- Health departments should consult with schools, businesses, and organizations that provide essential services to help them implement appropriate COVID-19 prevention measures and support broad-based efforts to notify people of a potential exposure.
- Health departments should support public education to encourage people with COVID-19 to [isolate](#) and [inform close contacts](#) about their potential exposure so close contacts can [quarantine](#), get [tested](#), [wear well-fitting masks](#), [take travel precautions](#), and [seek treatment](#) as appropriate.
- Health departments should offer COVID-19 [vaccinations](#) and other proven prevention strategies as part of their case investigation and contact tracing activities.
- Health departments have the authority to determine how case investigation and contact tracing should be implemented locally in response to each jurisdiction's needs, context, priorities and resources.

LOUISIANA COVID-19 VACCINE DEMOGRAPHICS

SERIES COMPLETED BY RACE:

- **White:** 58.09%
- **Black:** 31.83%
- **American Indian:** 0.42%
- **Asian:** 2.9%
- **Native Hawaiian:** 0.19%
- **Unknown:** 1.1%
- **Other:** 5.51%

SERIES COMPLETED BY AGE:

- **5-17:** 7.5%
- **18-29:** 13.3%
- **30-39:** 13.4%
- **40-49:** 13.7%
- **50-59:** 16.2%
- **60-69:** 18%
- **70+:** 17.9%

SERIES COMPLETED BY GENDER:

- **Female:** 54%
- **Male:** 45.7%
- **Unknown:** 0.2%

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

President Joe Biden outlines COVID-19 plans in State of the Union address. Read more at [time.com](#).

Covid has taken severe mental health toll: WHO. Read more at [news.yahoo.com](#).

COVID-19 hospitalizations are down, but nurse shortages stretch hospitals. Read more at [wsj.com](#).

Terrebonne Parish's COVID cases fall 20.3%; Louisiana cases drop 31.2%. Read more at [houmatoday.com](#).

Louisiana continues to see decline in COVID cases, hospitalizations. Read more at [wwltv.com](#).

Study examines Omicron variant transmission within households. Read more at [cdc.gov](#).