

IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 Update

September 29, 2022 | Issue 79



Question of the Week

Is the pandemic over?

After President Biden's recent statement on *60 Minutes* regarding the end of the pandemic, many people are asking when the pandemic will end or if the pandemic is over. Although we have come a long way in combating COVID-19 and we remain on the right track, COVID-19 continues to be a serious threat in some communities—and especially for people who are at highest risk of severe disease.



The Public Health Communications Collaborative has updated its messaging guidance to help answer questions about the state of COVID-19. Here are top-line tips and considerations to help communicate about the state of the pandemic and the continuing need for precautions:

- Emphasize the progress we've made
- Explain that the threat remains
- Emphasize public health recommendations
- Recognize uncertainty
- Underscore the role of public health

For additional resources, the Public Health Communications Collaborative has developed its [“Building Bridges”](#) resource to learn how to stay grounded in core messages and build trust with fact-based messaging.

CDC to re-launch the Flu Vaccination Dashboard

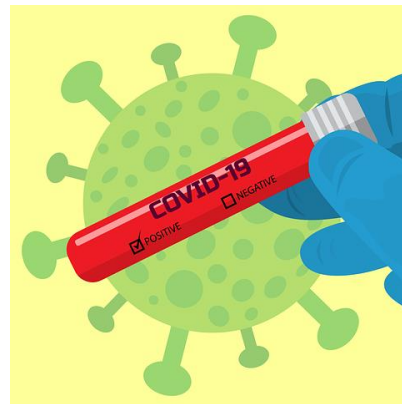
This Friday, Sept. 30, the CDC will relaunch its [Weekly Flu Vaccination Dashboard](#) for the 2022-23 flu season. The goal of this dashboard is to share preliminary, during-season flu vaccination data and coverage estimates using different data sources.

The updates to the dashboard will include additional national estimates for: flu vaccine supply, pregnant persons, and adults vaccinated in pharmacies and medical offices. National and state-level estimates for children and all adults are expected to be added to the dashboard in late October.

FDA updates test policy

This week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated its COVID-19 test policy to ensure continued access to tests while encouraging the transition of these important public health tools to traditional premarket review pathways.

Under the new policy, the FDA will review “only a small subset of new emergency use authorization (EUA) requests for diagnostic tests. The FDA encourages developers of all test types interested in marketing to pursue authorization through the [de novo classification or 510\(k\) clearance pre-market review pathways](#).”



In the future, the FDA will focus its review on EUA requests and supplemental EUA requests from experienced developers for:

- Diagnostic tests that are likely to have a significant benefit to public health (such as those that employ new technologies);
- Diagnostic tests that are likely to fulfill an unmet need (such as diagnosing infection with a new variant or subvariant);

- Supplemental EUA requests for previously authorized tests when the request is intended to fulfill a condition of authorization or includes a modification that will significantly benefit public health or fulfill an unmet need; and
- Tests for which the EUA request is from (or supported by) a U.S. government stakeholder, such as tests funded by the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) or the National Institutes of Health's Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx).

[Learn more.](#)

Moderna bivalent booster-provider ordering resumes

Providers can once again order additional doses of Moderna's bivalent booster vaccine, effective Sept. 23.

Please note: Bivalent booster vaccines will become authorized for children 5–11 years of age in the coming weeks. More detailed information regarding the new Pfizer and Moderna products for this age group will be sent out through the LA Immunization team once authorized.

Understanding exposure risks

The CDC recommends that individuals understand certain risk factors when they have been around an individual who has COVID-19.

Risk of transmission is increased when:

- Exposure time is longer. Contact longer than 15 minutes is more likely to result in transmission than two minutes of contact.
- A person is coughing, singing, shouting, or breathing heavily due to exertion.
- You are around people who are symptomatic.
- You are close to someone who is infected with COVID-19. Crowded settings can increase your chances of being close to someone with COVID-19.



Risk of transmission is decreased when:

- One person is wearing a mask. If both people are wearing masks, the risk is substantially decreased.
- Activities are outdoors.

[Learn more.](#)

Caring for people with post-COVID conditions

Health experts understand the challenges that families and caregivers face in supporting individuals who are experiencing a [post-COVID condition](#).

According to the CDC, “People experiencing post-COVID conditions may find different strategies to be helpful. If you are experiencing a post-COVID condition, you should engage in whatever [coping strategies](#) are best for your mental and physical health.”

To understand how different individuals cope with post-COVID conditions, the CDC recommends learning about the experiences of others who had a post-COVID condition, contributing or participating in scientific research, and learning how to manage stress.

[Explore specific strategies for caring for people with post-COVID conditions.](#)

LDH to hold flu vaccine clinics in Central Louisiana

The Louisiana Department of Health’s (LDH) Office of Public Health (OPH) in Central Louisiana (Region 6) will host drive-thru flu vaccine clinics at parish health units during the months of September and October in preparation for the upcoming flu season. COVID-19 vaccines, both primary series and the updated COVID-19 bivalent boosters, will also be available.



Each regional parish health unit will provide onsite flu and COVID-19 vaccines from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The flu shot is free, including to anyone who is uninsured. Those with insurance, Medicaid or Medicare coverage are encouraged to bring their insurance cards. If a participant has a previous COVID-19 vaccine card, they should bring that to be updated as well.

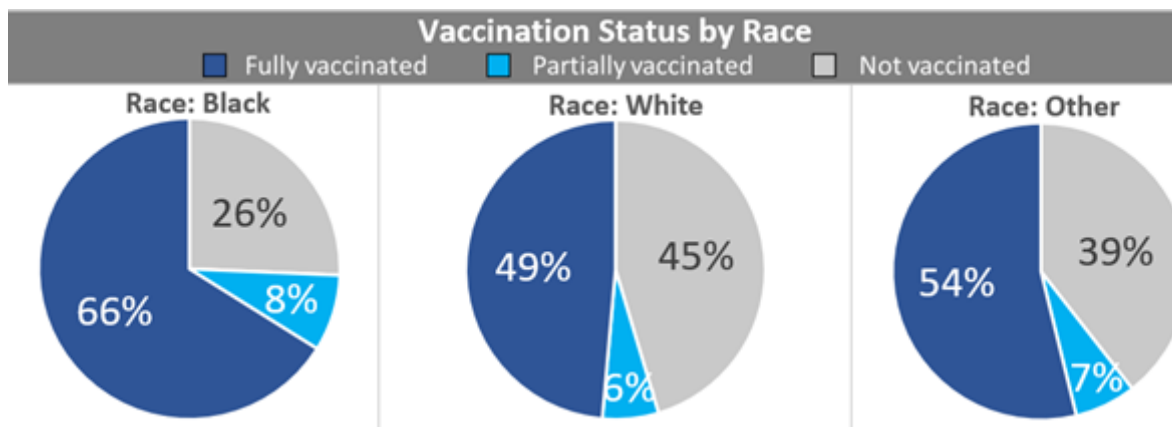
Those in need of a flu or COVID-19 vaccine may show up to any one of the health units below on the corresponding date.

- **Rapides Parish Health Unit:** Friday, September 30, 5604-A Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria
- **Winnfield Parish Health Unit:** Monday, October 3, 301 W. Main St., Winnfield
- **Grant Parish Health Unit:** Tuesday, October 4, 340-A Webb Smith Drive, Colfax
- **Avoyelles (Marksville) Parish Health Unit:** Wednesday, October 5, 657 Government St., Marksville
- **LaSalle Parish Health Unit:** Friday, October 7, 1673 N. Second St., Jena
- **Avoyelles (Bunkie) Health Unit:** Wednesday, October 12, 406 Walnut St., Bunkie
- **Catahoula Parish Health Unit:** Wednesday, October 12, 200 Third St., Jonesville
- **Vernon Parish Health Unit:** Friday, October 21, 406 Fertitta Blvd., Leesville
- **Concordia Parish Health Unit:** Thursday, October 27, 905 Mickey Gilley Ave., Ferriday

[Learn more.](#)

COVID-19 Demographics

As of September 27, 2022



Resources

- [Isolation and Exposure Calculator](#)
- [COVID Data Tracker](#)

Good reads

- [COVID: Pfizer seeks FDA approval for omicron booster in kids 5 to 11](#)
- [Long COVID Has Forced the U.S. to Take Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Seriously](#)
- [Louisiana federal judge blocks Biden COVID vaccine mandate for Head Start program](#)
- [Louisiana COVID-19 deaths surpass 18,000](#)
- [Citing decreasing COVID numbers, Ochsner drops mask requirement](#)



UPDATED COVID-19 BOOSTERS
CDC endorses updated COVID-19 boosters

Get the facts:

- These updated boosters are formulated to offer continued protection against the original strain, while also offering better protection against the two lineages of the Omicron variant, BA.4 and BA.5, which represent over 90% of currently circulating virus
- "Mix and matching" of the new bivalent booster dose is allowed

Who is eligible?

- **Moderna:** individuals 18 years of age and older
- **Pfizer:** individuals 12 years of age and older

COVID - 19 Vaccine

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Submit a Question of the Week

Do you have a frequently asked question that you would like to submit or have answered in the QOW?

[SUBMIT HERE](#)

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