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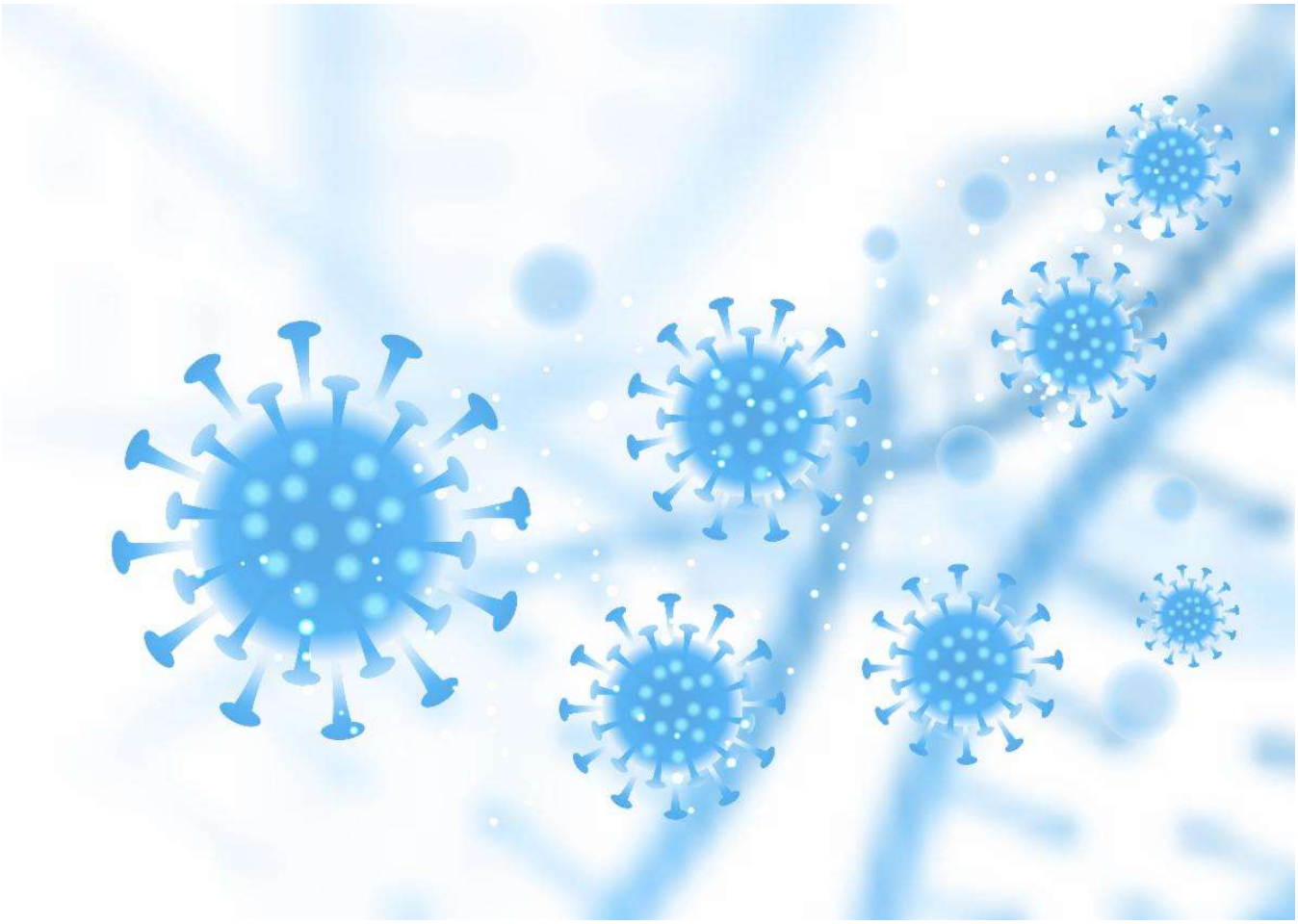
IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 Update

June 16, 2022 | Issue 64



Question of the Week

When are individuals considered "up to date" on their COVID-19 vaccinations?

The CDC considers individuals to be "up to date" on COVID-19 vaccinations when they have received all doses in the primary series and all boosters recommended for them, when eligible.

- Vaccine recommendations are different depending on an individual's age, the vaccine first received, and the time since the last dose. **Learn more here**.

- Learn more about **COVID-19 vaccine recommendations specifically for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised**.

Pediatric COVID-19 vaccines available for pre-order

The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 6 months to 5 years are available for pre-order through Thursday, June 16 at NOON. An FDA Advisory Committee **granted emergency use authorization** to both manufacturers this week. Next, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will review the matter prior to issuing a final recommendation.

The Louisiana Department of Health recommends that pediatric providers have a minimum of 20 doses of the Moderna 2-dose series (one 10-dose vial for the first doses; one 10-dose vial for the second doses). The Moderna vaccine would arrive frozen and can be stored for 6 months in the freezer and/or 30 days refrigerated.

LDH also recommends that pediatric providers have a minimum of 30 doses of Pfizer (one 10-dose vial for first, second, and third doses). The Pfizer vaccine would arrive refrigerated and can be stored for up to 10 weeks or 12 months in a ULT freezer.

Louisiana providers must pre-order the vaccines through LINKS. View the **LINKS ordering information** for ordering instructions. Or contact the Louisiana Immunization Program at **(504) 568-2664** or **la.immunization@la.gov**.

CDC removes COVID-19 testing requirements for air passengers traveling to the U.S.

Individuals boarding flights to the U.S. are no longer required to show negative COVID-19 test results or provide documentation of recovery from COVID-19, the CDC announced last week. The change took effect on June 12, which means that air passengers do not need to get tested and provide COVID-19 test results before boarding a flight to the U.S.

CDC cited vaccine effectiveness, the availability of effective therapeutics, and the "accrual of high rates of vaccine- and infection-induced immunity at the population level" in the U.S. as factors that have led to the change in air travel requirements. CDC continues to recommend that those travelers boarding a flight to the U.S. get tested for current infection with a viral test as close to the time of departure as possible (no more than three days) and not travel if they are sick. **Read more**.

Speakers announced for the Vaccine Confidence-Building Action Lab

Louisiana Vaccine Equity Initiative will host a virtual Vaccine Confidence-Building Action Lab on June 30 from 9 a.m.–11:30 a.m. This is a virtual session bringing together Louisianans who have engaged in COVID-19 outreach, education, and vaccination efforts to share what has worked and not worked, discuss best practices, and ideas for the future. **Register here**.

Confirmed speakers for the Action Lab include:

- **Getting The Wheels Turning**, Liz Leger, Avoyelles Sleeves Up Nonprofit
- **Increasing Vaccine Confidence and Access for the Autism Community with the Vaccine Education Initiative**, Claire Tibbets, Greater New Orleans Autism Society

- **Made to Save: Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy among African Americans**, Nurse Carla Brown, Canon Hospice
- **Integrating COVID-19 Vaccines into Syringe Service Programs**, Katherine Conner, MPH, CrescentCare Health
- **Lessons Learned from COVID Outreach in Lafayette: What We did, How We Did it and What We are Still Doing in the Latino Community**, Pablo Estrada-Vasquez, Asociacion Cultura Latino - Acadiana (ACLA)
- **Vaccine Outreach Team: Reaching People Experiencing Homelessness**, Tiffanie Fife, Director of Nursing and Angie Neal, RN, STARTCorp

FDA issues Emergency Use Authorization for Labcorp's VirSeq SARS-CoV-2 next generation sequencing test

The FDA has issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the **Laboratory Corporation of America (Labcorp) VirSeq SARS-CoV-2 Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) Test** on the PacBio Sequel II sequencing system. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the SARS-CoV-2 virus has mutated into various genetic variations "in circulating strains" known as lineages.

The FDA noted that the Labcorp VirSeq SARS-CoV-2 NGS Test is:

- The first COVID-19 test authorized for the identification and differentiation of SARS-CoV-2 **Phylogenetic Assignment of Named Global Outbreak (PANGO)** lineages.
- An NGS-based test authorized for testing patient respiratory samples identified as SARS-CoV-2 positive using Labcorp's COVID-19 RT-PCR Test and Labcorp SARS-CoV-2 & Influenza A/B Assay.
- Intended to be used when a health care provider decides, based on a patient's medical history and other diagnostic information, that the test results may help in deciding the appropriate clinical care for the patient.
- The test can be performed at certain laboratories designated by Labcorp that are certified under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA) that meet the requirements to perform high-complexity testing.

To learn more, view the **Labcorp VirSeq SARS-CoV-2 NGS Test - Healthcare Provider Fact Sheet**.

Improved ventilation may help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools

Improved ventilation systems may help reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in schools and, thereby, keep more students in school. A new study of K–12 public schools in the U.S. found the use of higher-cost strategies, such as the use of high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration systems filters in classrooms or eating areas, were less frequently reported in comparison to the use of lower-cost ventilation improvement strategies.

The study, **Ventilation Improvement Strategies Among K–12 Public Schools — The National School COVID-19 Prevention Study**, was published in the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly.* It includes a representative sample of 420 U.S. public schools from the study period of Feb. 14, 2022–March 27, 2022.

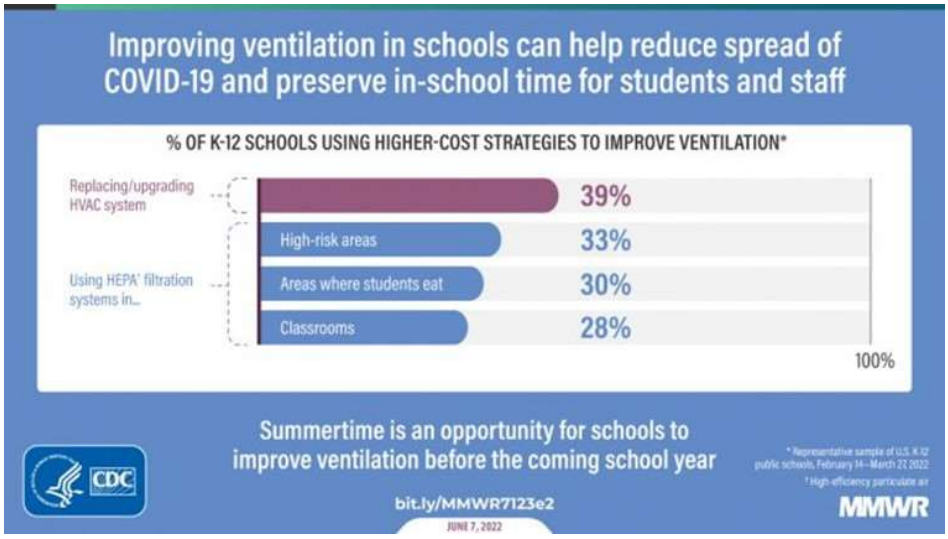
Regarding schools' use of higher-cost ventilation improvement strategies, the researchers found that:

- 39% replaced/upgraded HVAC systems
- 33% used HEPA filtration systems in high-risk areas
- 30% used HEPA filtration systems in areas where students eat
- 28% used HEPA filtration systems in classrooms

Conversely, the schools most frequently reported the use of lower-cost ventilation improvement strategies:

- 74% relocated activities outdoors
- 71% inspected and validated existing heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems
- 67% open doors when it is safe to do so
- 67% open windows when safe to do so

Additionally, rural and mid-poverty schools were the least likely to report implementing several resource-intensive ventilation strategies. “Ensuring use of ventilation improvement resource might reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and other infectious diseases in schools,” the CDC reported.



COVID-19 Resources

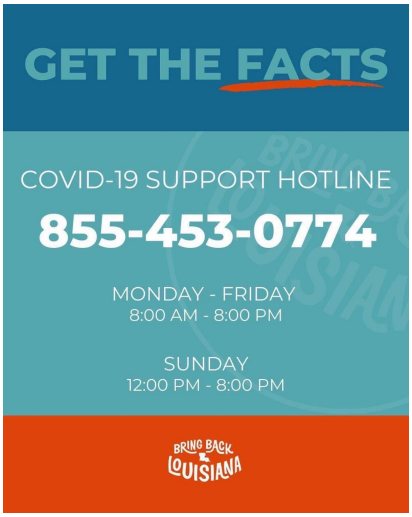
- COVID-19 Vaccine: Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals
- Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines
- COVID-19 Vaccine Lot Number and Expiration Dates
- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines
- Administration Overview for Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine
- Administration Overview for Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine
- CDC COVID Data Tracker: Vaccinations in the US
- COVID-19 Vaccine Handling Toolkit

Good Reads

- COVID-19 rising in Americas, biggest spike in South America
- COVID-19 hits a US plateau: Why aren’t cases going up or down?
- Pfizer says Paxlovid doesn’t help COVID-19 patients unless they are high risk
- Long Covid Is Showing Up in the Employment Data
- FDA committee recommends Moderna two-dose Covid vaccine for kids ages 6 to 17

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?



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