

COVID-19 Vax Facts (July 6 – July 12)

Delta becomes the most dominant variant in the U.S. – July 6, 2021. The CDC released [new estimates](#) this week which show that the Delta variant now makes up more than 51% of new COVID-19 cases in the U.S. In some states, this variant, first detected in India, accounts for more than 80% of new cases. The good news is that vaccines authorized in the U.S. are still highly effective against serious diseases, hospitalizations, and deaths caused by this variant. Read more [here](#).

CDC, FDA, and Pfizer debate the need for COVID-19 booster shots– July 8, 2021. A full two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine still offers strong protection against the COVID-19 Delta variant, but early data from the company's booster study suggests that individuals' antibody levels jump five to 10-fold after a third dose. The company therefore hopes to secure emergency use authorization for a third dose to protect against developing variants; however, the FDA and CDC released a rare [joint statement](#) this week declaring that booster shots are not needed at this time. Read more [here](#).

CDC emphasizes vaccination as key to safely returning to in-person learning this fall – July 9, 2021. According to the agency's new recommendations, vaccinating eligible students as well as teachers, staff, and household members is one of the most critical strategies for helping schools safely resume full operations. School-goers need to complete their vaccine course (2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech, or one dose of J&J) more than 2 weeks before classes start to be fully vaccinated by the fall semester. Increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates will likely affect patterns of transmission in schools and communities. Read the new guidance [here](#).

FDA flags a potential rare risk of Guillain-Barré Syndrome after J&J vaccination – July 12, 2021. The US FDA announced on Monday that the J&J COVID-19 vaccine might increase the risk of acquiring a rare neurological condition known as Guillain-Barré syndrome. Federal officials identified 100 suspected cases of this syndrome among 12.8 million recipients of the J&J vaccine (about 0.000008%) with only one possible related death. The FDA *did not* establish that the vaccine causes this rare neurological disorder, but they did add a warning to the vaccine fact sheets to keep patients and providers informed. Read the FDA letter [here](#).

COVID-19 case rates last week were about 3 times higher in states where less than 50% of the population are vaccinated– July 12, 2021. According to data from the CDC and John Hopkins University, states that have fully vaccinated more than half of their residents reported an average of 2.8 new Covid-19 cases per 100,000 people each day last week, compared to an average of about 7.8 cases per 100,000 people each day in states that have vaccinated less than half of their residents. Across the U.S., more than 99% of COVID-19 deaths in June were in unvaccinated people. Read more [here](#), and see the case rates in your county [here](#).

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