

2-9-2021

## COVID-19 Newsletter (vol. 58)

Center for Disaster Medicine, New York Medical College



# NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

A MEMBER OF THE Touro College and University System

## Center for Disaster Medicine



**Tuesday, February 9, 2021**

***During this COVID-19 pandemic and other future events, the CDM has been and will continue to be a source of reliable information, education and models for mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. We hope this informational document has helped provide you filtered and actionable information. As the pace of new information and changes occur, we will evaluate the current once per week to determine if this information should be provided on a more frequent basis.***

David Markenson, M.D., M.B.A.

Director

Center for Disaster Medicine

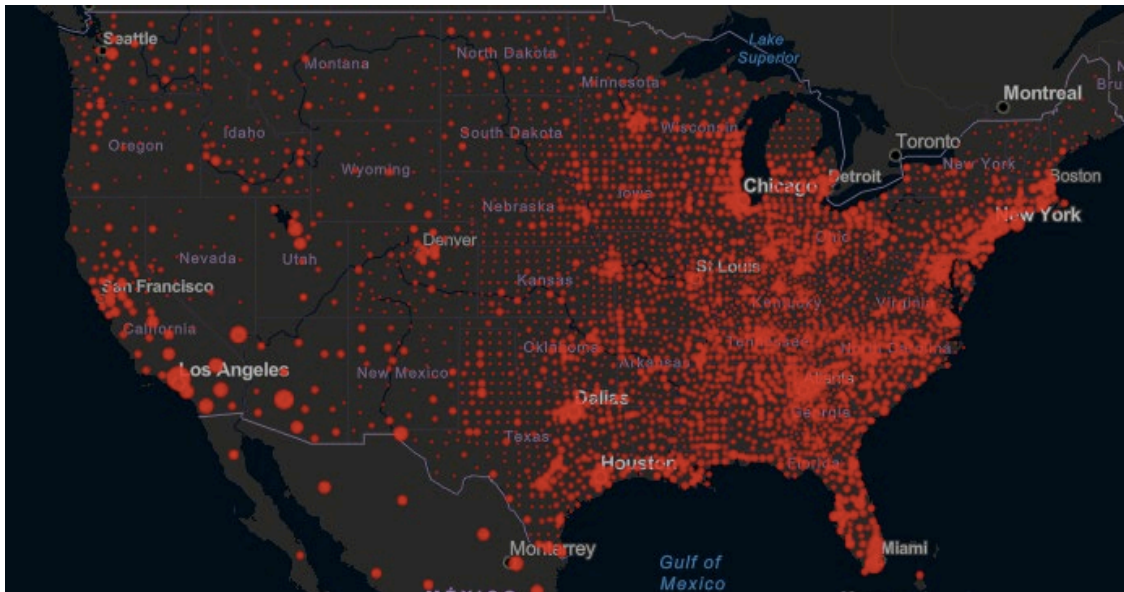
### **COVID-19 Statistics**

	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Total Tested

Worldwide	106,293,023	2,320,254	59,298,828	Not Available
United States	27,015,893	463,647	Not Available	320,378,941
New Jersey	722,167	21,989	69,953	9,721,078
New York	1,489,196	44,839	132,905	33,498,467
Connecticut	259,372	7,214	9,800	5,959,472

Information as of 2/8/21 at 2000 EST. Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

### **United States COVID-19 Case Map / GIS**



### **Center for Disaster Medicine Updates**

- Coordinating volunteers to support local public health response to COVID-19.
- Conducting research and analysis of current events and COVID-19 response to identify strengths and areas for improvement in other regions.
- Updating and developing new programs to provide enhanced education on public health emergencies including pandemics.
- Redesigning summer fellowship in disaster and emergency medicine to better address preparedness skills, lessons learned and highlight the importance of high-fidelity simulation in medical education while finding new focus on pandemic-related research projects.

- Exploring course development opportunities in infection prevention and control for frontline responders in the hospital and in the field.
- Serving as a source of information for COVID-19 related concerns or questions regarding public health, emergency medical service (EMS), public safety and healthcare response.
- Local networking and pandemic response analysis for New York's tri-state area, using first-person experiences to highlight current trends.
- Coordinating and overseeing COVID-19 screenings at NYMC campus
- Offered Geriatric Emergency Medical Services and All Hazard Disaster Response courses to public safety provider
- Hosted The COVID-19 MCI: What Training Didn't Prepare Us For
- COVID-19 Vaccines: Virtual Q & A Session
- Offered Incident Response to Terrorist Bombing

**To view the Center for Disaster Medicine's newest webinar, please click here - [The COVID-19 Vaccine: What to Tell Your Patients](#)**

## **Federal Updates**

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reached a milestone in just a month and a half's time administering 1 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to Veterans and VA health care workers. As of February 2, the VA has dispensed at least one dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine to more than 582,000 Veterans and has fully vaccinated over 44,000, totaling more than 626,000 doses. This is in addition to administering more than 401,000 doses to VA employees, and more than 1,200 vaccine doses to federal partners. "In addition to administering 1 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, VA has begun publishing the number of Veterans who have received Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna vaccines at each facility across its enterprise," said Acting VA Secretary Dat Tran. "The number of doses administered to Veterans at each facility will be updated daily on the VA COVID-19 National Summary website." <https://www.accesstocare.va.gov/Healthcare/COVID19NationalSummary>
- As of February 3, there are 130 federally supported sites operational across the country. FEMA has deployed 449 staff to provide personnel and technical assistance and additional staff are supporting virtually. As the number of states with obligations increases, we will work alongside other federal agencies to provide federal support for critical staffing, supplies and other shortfalls that can help get more Americans vaccinated. The federal government is partnering with state governments to launch a small number of pilot community vaccination centers using primarily federal staff to support state and local governments. <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210204/fema-supports-vaccine-distribution-covid-19-response-update>

## **The White House**

President Biden believes that the federal government must act swiftly and aggressively to help protect and support our families, small businesses, first responders, and caregivers essential to help us face this challenge, those who are most vulnerable to health and economic impacts, and our broader communities – not to blame others or bail out corporations. Read the recently released National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/priorities/covid-19/>

President Biden will deliver bold action and immediate relief for American families as the country grapples with converging crises. This will include actions to control the COVID-19 pandemic, provide economic relief, tackle climate change, and advance racial equity and civil rights, as well as immediate actions to reform our immigration system and restore America's standing in the world.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov>

## **Health and Human Services (HHS)**

In accordance with the Executive Order issued on January 28 by President Biden, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), announced a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for individuals and families for Marketplace coverage in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, which has left millions of Americans facing uncertainty and exceptional circumstances while millions of Americans have experienced new health problems during the pandemic.

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/01/28/hhs-announces-marketplace-special-enrollment-period-for-covid-19-public-health-emergency.html>

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today issued a fifth amendment to the Declaration under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) to add additional categories of qualified persons authorized to prescribe, dispense, and administer COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/01/28/hhs-amends-prep-act-declaration-increase-workforce-authorized-administer-covid-19-vaccines.html>

For the latest COVID-19 information from HHS

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/coronavirus/index.html>

## **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

An international randomized, controlled Phase 3 clinical trial has begun evaluating the safety and efficacy of an investigational long-acting antibody combination for treating people hospitalized with COVID-19. The trial, part of a master protocol known as ACTIV-3, has an adaptive design allowing investigators to add new sub-studies of additional investigational agents. ACTIV-3 is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/clinical-trial-hospitalized-covid-19-patients-evaluates-long-acting-antibody-therapy>

View the latest COVID-19 information from NIH

<https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus>

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## **United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has scheduled a meeting of its Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) on February 26, 2021, to discuss the request for emergency use authorization (EUA) for a COVID-19 vaccine from Janssen Biotech Inc.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-announces-advisory-committee-meeting-discuss-janssen-biotech-incs>

As of February 5, 2021, 322 tests and sample collection devices are authorized by the FDA under emergency use authorizations (EUAs). These include 239 molecular tests and sample collection devices, 69 antibody tests, and 14 antigen tests. There are 35 molecular authorizations that can be used with home-collected samples. There is one molecular prescription at-home test, one antigen prescription at-home test, and one over-the-counter (OTC) at-home antigen test.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-february-5-2021>

For the latest overall FDA information about COVID-19

<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/counterterrorism-and-emerging-threats/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

CDC provides updated guidance for small gatherings during upcoming holidays such as Valentine's Day and President's Day. Travel increases your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19 due to potential exposures on public transit, at airports, or in hotels. CDC continues to recommend postponing travel and staying home, as this is the best way to protect yourself and others this year.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/small-gatherings.html>

CDC provides update on COVID-19 cases caused by variants in the United States.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant-cases.html>

For daily updates of cases in United States

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>

For the latest CDC information

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/index.html>

## **Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**

View the latest information from CMS

<https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>

## **Vaccines**

In this section, vaccine-related information from various sources will be collected, reviewed, and tabulated here. As of February 9, 2021, the FDA has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only to Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna. As additional vaccines are granted EUA, information for those vaccines will also be included.

The new NYS DOH COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker Dashboard will update New Yorkers on the distribution of the vaccine including the number of doses received by the state, a breakdown of first or second doses, and the number of persons vaccinated with the first and second doses in each region.

<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-tracker>

NYS DOH releases instructions for New York State-operated vaccination sites

<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>

For NYC DOHMH updated guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccine

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page>

The Vaccine Finder is a one-stop site for New Yorkers to find their nearest COVID-19 vaccination location. The Vaccine Finder can also provide New Yorkers with information to schedule vaccination appointments.

<https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>



CDC created this section regarding the Moderna vaccine to provide updated relevant information including side effects and safety data, clinical trials demographic statistics, and information on how the vaccine works.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Moderna.html>

CDC created this section regarding the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine to provide updated relevant information including side effects and safety data, clinical trials demographic statistics, and information on how the vaccine works.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Pfizer-BioNTech.html>

CDC created this section regarding COVID-19 vaccinations in the United States

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>

HHS created this section to provide the latest information about COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/index.html>

## **Educational Institution Information**

- Higher Education
  - Last August, as students were returning to campuses across the country, the United States was between two waves of COVID-19. Case counts across the country were fairly low, at least in comparison to where we've found ourselves now. Still, a number of large, mostly public, universities went through what seemed to some to be disaster situations. This semester, those institutions that put up the highest numbers for student case counts appear to be doing better. They have fewer cases and are, on the whole, performing more testing. While some of the numbers may still be worrisome, representing hundreds of students infected, they are often a far cry from the record-breaking tallies reported in the fall.  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/02/08/large-institutions-reporting-fewer-covid-19-infections-now-fall>
  - New research finds jump in number of questions submitted to "homework help" website Chegg after start of pandemic, an increase the authors say is very likely linked to rise in cheating.  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/02/05/study-finds-nearly-200-percent-jump-questions-submitted-chegg-after-start-pandemic>
- K-12
  - Weekly testing of students and teachers with Abbott's BinaxNOW rapid antigen tests cuts in-school COVID-19 infections by up to 50 percent, according to a new pilot study. The study, commissioned by The Rockefeller Foundation, piloted weekly antigen testing at K-12 schools in six U.S. cities including Los Angeles, New Orleans and Washington, D.C. The test had the biggest effect on infections when used to test both teachers and students at least every week in high schools. However, the pilot identified barriers to the effective use, including limitations of Abbott's associated app and significant costs beyond the \$5 paid for each test. New Orleans testing leads also noted in the study the Abbott tests are not officially approved for use in children or in asymptomatic cases. "While we can hypothesize that antigen tests can solve the cost and time



limitations of PCR testing, we have no idea how well the tests work in children," they said in the study.

- <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Early-Insights-and-Recommendations-for-K-12-Schools-Covid-19-Testing-Lessons-Learned-from-Six-Pilot-Sites.pdf>
- <https://www.k12dive.com/news/study-abbott-test-cuts-in-school-covid-19-infections-by-up-to-50-but-cha/594637/>
- Interest in offering summer instruction and enrichment programming for greater numbers of students is building amid pressure for school systems to address students' learning loss and social-emotional health, said National Summer Learning Association CEO Aaron Dworkin. And although there are logistical and funding hurdles to running summer programs during a pandemic, districts are getting creative by testing out unique strategies, forming new partnerships and applying lessons learned during the school year to make virtual and hybrid learning equitable and fun, Dworkin said. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/districts-turn-to-summer-programming-to-help-address-learning-loss/594246/>
- Kindergartners losing months of school or skipping the grade entirely due to the novel coronavirus pandemic will face long-term impacts as a result of the disruption to a critical foundational learning year in which rapid brain development and academic base-building occurs, [EdSource reports](#). About 17 percent of families surveyed by the University of [Oregon](#) reported choosing to delay their kindergarten-age students from starting school last fall. Los Angeles Unified School District — the largest school district in California and second-largest nationwide — reported about 6,000 fewer kindergartners this year than last. The “COVID slide” may be especially drastic for those in this year's kindergarten cohort, early childhood advocates say. Students who don't hit certain milestones in reading and math may struggle later, and those skipping kindergarten entirely are likely to be particularly disadvantaged when they enter 1st grade in the fall. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/coronavirus-related-kindergarten-setbacks-will-have-long-term-achievement-i/594413/>

## Clinical Trials

To view the latest information on 4,636 clinical trials regarding COVID-19

<https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/results?recrs=&cond=Covid19&term=&cntry=&state=&city=&dist=>

## American Red Cross

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html>

## State Updates

## New York

- On February 4, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued a letter asking New York's Congressional delegation for fair and proportional funding in the next COVID-19 aid package that helps New York State and localities, repeals the SALT cap, provides relief/mortgage relief, and helps restaurant workers. The letter asks the Congressional delegation to avoid politics by funding state and local governments based on need, directly funding governments rather than bypassing them to fund schools, hospitals and organizations directly, repealing the SALT cap and helping the restaurant industry.  
<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-issues-letter-asking-new-york-congressional-delegation-fair-funding-next-covid>
- Governor Cuomo released the list of comorbidities and underlying conditions that New York State will use to determine eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine. New Yorkers who have one of the comorbidities on the list will be eligible for the vaccine beginning February 15. The full list of comorbidities and underlying conditions is available at the website below. The list is subject to change as additional scientific evidence is published and as New York State obtains and analyzes additional state-specific data.  
<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-list-comorbidities-and-underlying-conditions-eligible-covid-19-vaccine>

## New York State Department of Health (DOH)

Governor Cuomo revised the eligibility list of persons to include any New Yorker of any age with certain comorbidities and underlying conditions effective February 15, 2021.

<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/phased-distribution-vaccine#phase-1a---phase-1b>

For a list of positive cases by county in New York State

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

NYS DOH has created a dynamic COVID-19 Tracker which provides COVID-19 information regarding testing, cases, percentages, and fatalities across New York State. It also breaks down cases by county.

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

For the latest COVID-19 information from NYS DOH

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

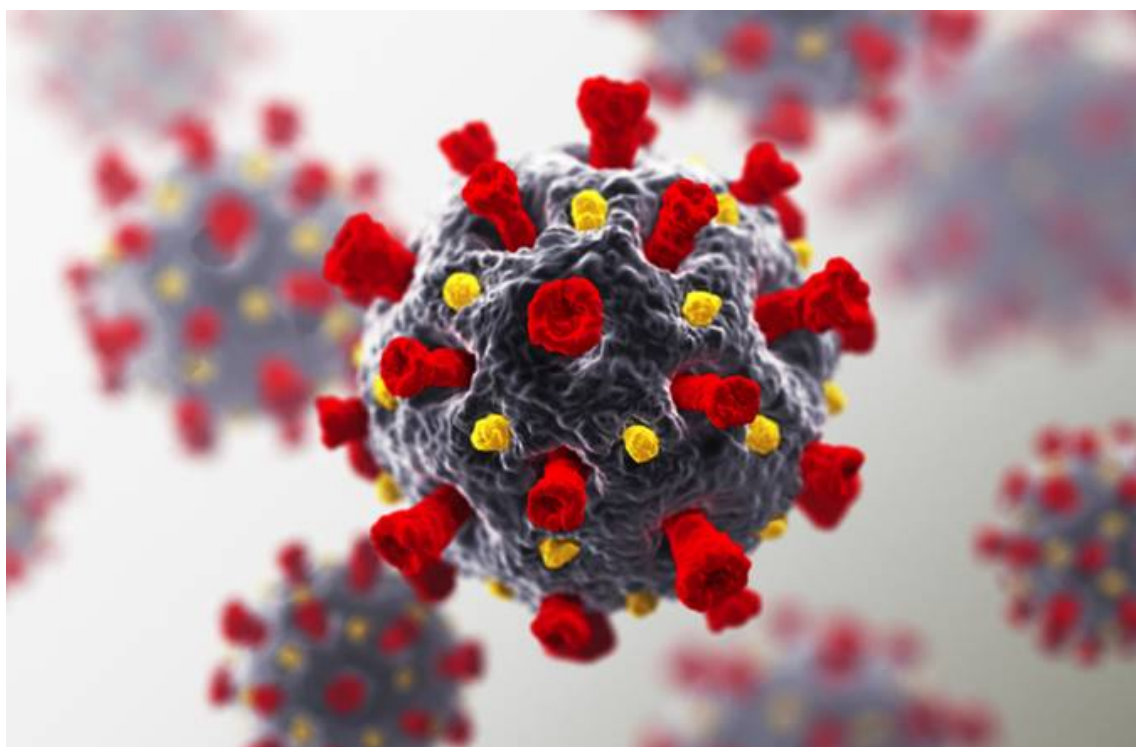
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## **New Jersey**

- Governor Phil Murphy announced an additional \$5 million has been allocated to the Small Business Lease. Emergency Assistance Grant Program (SBL-EAGP), which allows businesses in 64 legislatively designated municipalities to apply for grants of up to \$10,000 for lease costs. The program, which has already allocated \$10 million to roughly 1,000 businesses, assists small business owners impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. <https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20210202a.shtml>
- Governor Murphy signed Executive Order No. 219, which increases indoor capacity limits from 25 percent to 35 percent for several businesses, including food and beverage establishments and entertainment and recreational businesses, effective Friday, February 5 at 8:00 a.m. The Executive Order also lifts the 10:00 p.m. curfew for in-person indoor restaurant service, however local officials may continue to regulate the hours of operation of indoor restaurant service and indoor operations of other non-essential businesses after 8:00 p.m., as they have been able to since November 12. The prohibition on seating at indoor bar areas remains in effect. <https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-219.pdf>

## **Connecticut**

- Governor Ned Lamont announced that his administration will be delivering an additional \$40 million to Connecticut's acute care hospitals to support their ongoing work responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding, which comes from the state's Coronavirus Relief Fund, will be distributed to non-governmental, short-term general hospitals that meet certain requirements based on applicable costs and expenses incurred as a result of the pandemic. It supplements the over \$980 million direct federal funding received by the hospitals to date during the pandemic. <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2021/02-2021/Governor-Lamont-Allocates-40-Million-To-Connecticut-Hospitals>
- Working in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the United Way of Connecticut announced plans to expand availability and access to COVID-19 vaccine scheduling through the state's vaccine appointment hotline. Beginning Monday, February 8, 2021, the hotline will have expanded hours, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days per week. A total of 125 trained contact specialists will answer calls and will have the capability of booking up to 10,000 appointments per week at 12 locations across Connecticut. The phone number to call to schedule a vaccine appointment is 877-918-2224. <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Press-Room/Press-Releases---2021/Connecticut-Vaccine-Appointment-Assist-Line--Expanding-to-12-Hours-per-Day---7-Days-a-Week>



## Local Updates

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### **New York Blood Center (NYBC)**

Following a historic blizzard, NYC's blood supply is dangerously low- New York Blood Center is putting out the call for blood donors following the winter storm that blew through New York City. Because of the blizzard, 1,500 fewer blood donations were made, all community blood drives were cancelled, and donor centers had to be closed early. NYBC needs New Yorkers to come in and donate to rebuild the blood supply.

<https://www.nybc.org/news/articles/following-historic-blizzard-nycs-blood-supply-dangerously-low/>

For the latest updated NYBC information about COVID-19:

<https://nybc.org/covid-19/>

### **New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)**

NYC DOHMH issues 2021 Health Advisory #3 in order to collect and report race and ethnicity data to help ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/han/advisory/2021/covid-19-vaccine-race-ethnicity-data.pdf>

For NYC DOHMH updated COVID-19 data page  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page>

For the latest COVID-19 information from NYC DOHMH  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page>

## **Westchester County Department of Health**

For the latest breakdown of positive cases in Westchester County as of February 7, 2021  
<https://wcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/280339d96db14efd9cc304dba0f3a71d>

For the latest COVID-19 information in Westchester including how to avoid the latest vaccine scams offering earlier access to vaccines.  
<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>

## **Putnam County Department of Health**

Breakdown of positive cases by towns in Putnam County as of February 8, 2021-  
<https://www.putnamcountyny.com/breakdown-of-positive-cases-by-towns-in-putnam-county-2-1-2021-2/>

For the latest COVID-19 information  
<https://www.putnamcountyny.com/health/coronavirus/>

## **Dutchess County Department of Health**

Breakdown of positive cases in Dutchess County as of February 8, 2021-  
<https://dcny.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/8905f4428f3148d0bffd50a2f3e4db11>

For the latest COVID-19 information:  
<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.htm>

## **Orange County Department of Health**

For the latest COVID-19 information  
<https://www.orangecountygov.com/1906/2019-Novel-Coronavirus-Information>

Updated COVID-19 dashboard for Orange County, NY  
<https://ocnygis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/21de1fb5ce0c480f95dc0cf2b8b83b71>

## **Rockland County Department of Health**

Review Rockland County's dashboard with the latest COVID-19 information regarding cases, hospitalizations and deaths  
<https://rockland-covid-19-portal-rockland.hub.arcgis.com/>

For the latest COVID-19 information  
<https://rocklandgov.com/departments/health/coronavirus-covid-19/>

## Healthcare

HHS promotes COVID-19 and Flu Campaign- The HHS COVID-19 and Flu Public Education Campaign aims to increase public confidence in COVID-19 vaccines while reinforcing basic prevention measures, including mask wearing and social distancing. The Campaign is focusing on a group called “the movable middle”—Americans who want to protect their health but are hesitant about getting vaccines.

<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/education-campaign/index.html>

For the latest COVID-19 information from HHS

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/coronavirus/index.html>



## Center for Disaster Medicine Media

### **Faculty News:**

**Vaccine makers work to take on coronavirus variants**

CBS News

1/29/2021

<https://www.cbsnews.com/video/covid-vaccine-variants-johnson-and-johnson/#x>

At 2:30: Robert G. Lahita, M.D., Ph.D., professor of medicine

**New York Medical College News:**

**VERIFY: Should you wait to get the COVID-19 vaccine if you're currently sick?**

ABC 24

1/28/2021

<https://www.localmemphis.com/article/news/verify/can-i-get-the-covid-vaccine-i-am-sick-or-had-covid-vaccine-explainers-101-fact-check/65-6ae7a5d1-f2e8-4d8d-b359-511e3980df6d>

Video at 0:10: Robert W. Amler, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs

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