COVID-19 Newsletter (vol. 68)

Center for Disaster Medicine, New York Medical College

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Tuesday, April 20, 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
<th>Total Recovered</th>
<th>Total Tested</th>
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<tr>
<td>Worldwide</td>
<td>142,112,632</td>
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<td>Connecticut</td>
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<td>8,014</td>
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<td>7,697,168</td>
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Information as of 4/20/21 at 0000 EDT. Source: [https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html)

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

![United States COVID-19 Case Map](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html)

**Center for Disaster Medicine Updates**
● Collaborated with NYMC medical students and on April 6, 2021, presented at NYMC Medical Student Research Seminar regarding “Drawing Parallels between Public Health Crises and COVID-19”
● Delivered Geriatric Emergency Medical Services (GEMS) course to members of different public safety agencies from New York.
● Presented invited lecture regarding COVID-19 response and best practices to graduate students enrolled in Master in Homeland Security degree in Guatemala.
● Coordinating and overseeing COVID-19 screenings at NYMC campus
● Continue to partner with local organizations such as Westchester Department of Emergency Services and Westchester Medical Center to ensure ongoing collaboration with all public safety agencies.
● 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.
● 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.

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

Federal

● The White House released a report on the potential for inflation with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it will impact daily living. The report noted, “in the next several months we expect measured inflation to increase somewhat, primarily due to three different temporary factors: base effects, supply chain disruptions, and pent-up demand, especially for services. We expect these three factors will likely be transitory, and that their impact should fade over time as the economy recovers from the pandemic. After that, the longer-term trajectory of inflation is in large part a function of inflationary expectations. Here, too, we see some increase, but from historically low to more normal levels.”
The White House

As part of President Biden’s continued efforts to ensure the pandemic response reaches all people and all communities, the Biden Administration announced it will invest more than $4 billion to combat COVID-19 in Indian Country. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/16/fact-sheet-biden-administration-invests-4-billion-in-american-rescue-plan-funding-to-combat-covid-19-in-indian-country/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/16/fact-sheet-biden-administration-invests-4-billion-in-american-rescue-plan-funding-to-combat-covid-19-in-indian-country/)

The official website of the White House delivers bold action and immediate relief for American families as the country grapples with converging crises. This includes 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](https://www.whitehouse.gov)

Health and Human Services (HHS)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the availability of nearly $150 million to community-based health care providers to aid their response to COVID-19. These funds will support approximately 100 Health Center Program look-alikes to respond to and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, strengthen vaccination efforts, and enhance health care services and infrastructure in communities across the country. Health center look-alikes (LALs) are community-based health care providers that provide essential primary care services to underserved communities and vulnerable populations but are not Health Center Program grantees. This funding will be made available through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and is part of President Biden’s commitment to ensuring equity in the nation’s COVID-19 response and vaccination efforts. [https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/19/hhs-announces-nearly-150-million-dollars-from-american-rescue-plan.html](https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/19/hhs-announces-nearly-150-million-dollars-from-american-rescue-plan.html)

On April 16, COVID-19 Health Equity Chair, Marcella Nunez-Smith, M.D., convened the second COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration’s whole-of-society approach to mitigate the health inequities caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and for preventing such inequities in the future. This meeting specifically covered vaccine access and confidence. [https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/13/readout-second-covid-19-health-equity-task-force-meeting.html](https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/13/readout-second-covid-19-health-equity-task-force-meeting.html)


National Institutes of Health (NIH)
The National Institutes of Health will fund a large, randomized, placebo-controlled Phase 3 clinical trial to test several existing prescription and over-the-counter medications for people to self-administer to treat symptoms of COVID-19. Part of the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines (ACTIV) public–private partnership, the ACTIV-6 trial aims to provide evidence-based treatment options for the majority of adult patients with COVID-19 who have mild-to-moderate symptoms and are not sick enough to be hospitalized. NIH will provide an initial investment of $155 million in funding for the trial.


The experimental antiviral drug MK-4482 significantly decreased levels of virus and disease damage in the lungs of hamsters treated for SARS-CoV-2 infection, according to a new study from National Institutes of Health scientists. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19. MK-4482, delivered orally, is now in human clinical trials. Remdesivir, an antiviral drug already approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use against COVID-19, must be provided intravenously, making its use primarily limited to clinical settings.


The National Institutes of Health is awarding up to $33 million over two years to fund projects at 10 institutions across eight states to build evidence on safely returning students, teachers and support staff to in-person school in areas with vulnerable and underserved populations. This funding was made available by the American Rescue Plan. Known as the Safe Return to School Diagnostic Testing Initiative, the awards are part of the NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) program, which aims to increase COVID-19 testing access and uptake for vulnerable and underserved populations. Projects will combine frequent COVID-19 testing with proven safety measures to reduce the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.


The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, today announced that the fourth iteration of the Adaptive COVID-19 Treatment Trial (ACTT-4) has closed to enrollment because the study met pre-defined futility criteria indicating that neither treatment regimen studied is likely significantly better than the other. The NIAID-sponsored trial aimed to determine which of two drug combinations—baricitinib plus remdesivir or dexamethasone plus remdesivir — was more effective at preventing adults hospitalized with COVID-19 on supplemental oxygen from progressing to requiring mechanical ventilation or death, among other outcomes.


View the latest COVID-19 information from NIH

https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus
United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

As of April 16, 2021, 363 tests and sample collection devices are authorized by the FDA under emergency use authorizations (EUAs). These include 266 molecular tests and sample collection devices, 75 antibody and other immune response tests, and 22 antigen tests. There are 46 molecular authorizations and one antibody authorization that can be used with home-collected samples. There is one molecular prescription at-home test, two antigen prescription at-home tests, four over-the-counter (OTC) at-home antigen tests, and two OTC molecular tests. The FDA has authorized 7 antigen tests and 2 molecular tests for serial screening programs. The FDA has also authorized 457 revisions to EUA authorizations.


The U.S. Food and Drug Administration revoked the emergency use authorization (EUA) that allowed for the investigational monoclonal antibody therapy bamlanivimab, when administered alone, to be used for the treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in adults and certain pediatric patients. Based on its ongoing analysis of emerging scientific data, specifically the sustained increase of SARS-CoV-2 viral variants that are resistant to bamlanivimab alone resulting in the increased risk for treatment failure, the FDA has determined that the known and potential benefits of bamlanivimab, when administered alone, no longer outweigh the known and potential risks for its authorized use. Therefore, the agency determined that the criteria for issuance of an authorization are no longer met and has revoked the EUA.


For the latest overall FDA information about COVID-19.


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

COVID-19 vaccines are effective. However, a small percentage of people who are fully vaccinated will still get COVID-19 if they are exposed to the virus that causes it. These are called “vaccine breakthrough cases.” This means that while people who have been vaccinated are much less likely to get sick, it may still happen. Experts continue to study how common these cases are.


The emerging variants CDC is closely monitoring have mutations in the virus genome that alter the characteristics and cause the virus to act differently in ways that are significant to public health (e.g., causes more severe disease, spreads more easily between humans, requires different treatments, changes the effectiveness of current vaccines). It’s important to understand that genetic mutations are expected, and some variants can spread and become predominant while others subside.

 CDC provides daily data tracker which has maps and charts tracking cases, deaths, and trends of COVID-19 in the United States- updated daily by 8 p.m. ET.  
https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home

For the latest CDC information  

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

View the latest information from CMS  

Vaccines

In this section, vaccine-related information from various sources will be collected, reviewed, and tabulated here. As of April 20, 2021, the FDA has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson. Now with three vaccines with EUA, the goal is to vaccinate a larger number of persons in the coming months throughout the United States. As additional vaccines are granted EUA, information for those vaccines will also be included. CDC provides update on “How to talk about COVID-19 vaccines with friends and family.” COVID-19 vaccines are new, and it’s normal to for people to have questions about them. The sheer amount of information—and misinformation—about COVID-19 vaccines can be overwhelming to anyone.  

CDC created this section regarding COVID-19 vaccinations in the United States. CDC provides overall U.S. COVID-19 Vaccine, deliveries and administration, maps, charts, and data updated daily by 8 p.m.. This section represents all vaccine partners including jurisdictional partner clinics, retail pharmacies, long-term care facilities, Federal Emergency Management Agency and Health Resources and Services Administration partner sites, and federal entity facilities.  
https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations

Effective April 19, 2021, CDC announced that everyone 16 years of age and older is now eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccination. Get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can. Widespread vaccination is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic.  
A joint media briefing with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to discuss six reported cases of a rare type of blood clot in individuals who received the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine.  
https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/a0413-ji-vaccine.html

On April 13, 2021, CDC and FDA recommended a pause in the use of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. Of the nearly 7 million doses administered so far in the United States, a small number of reports of a rare and severe type of blood clot have been reported in people after receiving the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. All reports occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48, and symptoms occurred
six to 13 days after vaccination. As of April 13, 2021, of the more than 180 million doses administered so far of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, no reports matching those associated with the J&J/Janssen vaccine have been received.

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

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.

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.

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

On April 19, 2021, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo updated New Yorkers on the state's vaccination program. 131,589 doses have been administered across the state's vast distribution network in the last 24 hours, and nearly 1.4 million doses have been administered over the past seven days.

The 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/

NYC DOHMH provides 2021 Health Alert #6 regarding Cases of Cerebral Venous Sinus Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia after receipt of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine

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/

Educational Institution Information

- **Higher Education**
  - A bill allowing students to record class sessions for the purpose of lodging free speech and other complaints is likely to become law in Florida. The bill, which sailed through Florida’s House of Representatives and Senate, says that a student may record video or audio of class lectures not only for their own personal educational use but also “in connection with a complaint to the public institution of higher education where the recording was made, or as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding.” A recorded lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer, and these recordings must follow federal student privacy laws, the bill says. The possible penalty for publishing a recording without consent is $200,000.
  

- **K-12**
  - Kindergarten students, who did not enroll or attend schooling in noticeable numbers during the pandemic, are expected to have larger participation rates next school year, and school systems are planning now to meet these young learners’ needs. In fact, some education experts are predicting a “kindergarten bubble” of 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds who may be more unprepared for formal schooling compared to past years’ cohorts, and who will come to school with a wider range of skills based on their COVID-19 academic and social experiences. Typically, preschool and kindergarten are filled with hands-on, play-based activities that not only support early reading and math skills, but also introduce vital social and emotional skills such as sharing, turn-taking and resolving conflicts, according to early childhood education experts. But when the pandemic forced those experiences online unnaturally, many families decided to delay enrollment or attendance in formal schooling. In fact, preschool and kindergarten enrollment dipped by sizable numbers in some places.
  

Clinical Trials

To view the latest information on clinical trials regarding COVID-19
American Red Cross


State Updates

New York

- Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that spectators will be allowed at horse and auto races at 20 percent capacity, beginning Thursday, April 22. Spectators will be subject to the State's strict guidance, which is currently in effect for other professional sports competitions with fans. Attendees must show proof of a recent negative test or completed vaccination series prior to entry and are subject to the State’s health and safety protocols on face coverings, social distancing, and health screening. The Governor also announced that the curfew for food and beverage establishments will be moved from 11 p.m. to midnight effective Monday, April 19. The curfew for catered events will move from midnight to 1 a.m. https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-spectators-will-be-allowed-horse-and-auto-races-20-percent-capacity

- Governor Cuomo announced that applications are now being accepted for the $26.6 million available to support essential workers and first responders through the Empire Pandemic Response Reimbursement Fund program. The program, coordinated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, is designed to reimburse out-of-pocket child or dependent care, transportation, lodging and other qualifying expenses that eligible workers incurred while employed in New York State between March 1, 2020, through the date of application submission. Up to $1,000 is available per household. The funding comes from private donations from individuals, charitable trusts and businesses made during the COVID crisis. https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-applications-now-being-accepted-266-million-empire-pandemic-grant

New York State Department of Health (DOH)

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


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.


For the latest COVID-19 information from NYS DOH
New Jersey

- Governor Phil Murphy signed into law A-5445, which provides $10 million in federal COVID-19 relief aid for childcare providers throughout New Jersey. The bill – sponsored by Senators M. Teresa Ruiz and Joseph Lagana and Assembly Members Lisa Swain, Gabriela Mosquera, and Adam Taliaferro – will provide grants to childcare providers in need. The bill is part of a five-bill, $100 million relief effort aimed at helping New Jersey’s economy recover from the year-long pandemic. [https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20210413b.shtml](https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20210413b.shtml)

- Governor Murphy signed Executive Order No. 235. The Order extends the Public Health Emergency that was declared on March 9, 2020 through Executive Order No. 103, which was previously extended in 2020 on April 7, May 6, June 4, July 2, August 1, August 27, September 25, October 24, November 22, and December 21, and again in 2021 on January 19, February 17, and March 17. Under the Emergency Health Powers Act, a declared public health emergency expires after 30 days unless renewed. [https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-235.pdf](https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-235.pdf)

Connecticut

- Governor Ned Lamont, along with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Consumer Protection Commissioner Michelle Seagull, announced that the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) has published a step-by-step informational guide to pursuing a career in the skilled trades that aims to promote a more diverse workforce, and support women and historically disadvantaged groups in finding stable employment and higher wages as Connecticut recovers from the economic downturn of the COVID-19 pandemic. [https://portal.ct.gov/careerinthetrades](https://portal.ct.gov/careerinthetrades)
Local Updates

New York Blood Center (NYBC)
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)
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 April 18, 2021
https://wcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/280339d96db14efd9cc304dba0f3a71d
For the latest COVID-19 information in Westchester including how to avoid the latest vaccine scams offering earlier access to vaccines.

Putnam County Department of Health

Breakdown of positive cases by towns in Putnam County as of April 16, 2021-
https://www.putnamcountyny.com/covid19/

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 April 19, 2021

For the latest COVID-19 information:

Orange County Department of Health

Updated COVID-19 dashboard for Orange County, NY as of April 19, 2021
https://ocnygis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/21de1fb5ce0c480f95dc0cf2b8b83b71
For the latest COVID-19 information

Rockland County Department of Health

Review Rockland County’s dashboard with the latest COVID-19 information regarding cases as of April 19, 2021

For the latest COVID-19 information

Healthcare

The House passed legislation (H.R. 1868) last week to extend the moratorium on the two percent across-the-board Medicare payment cuts—also known as Medicare sequestration cuts—to all providers that serve Medicare patients through the end of 2021. President Joe Biden signed it into law shortly thereafter.

For the latest COVID-19 information for healthcare facilities from the Greater New York Hospital Association that covers hospitals in the tri-state area.
https://www.gnyha.org/
New York Medical College Leadership News:
NYMC disaster response center awarded $1M from state
The Business Journal
4/14/2021
https://westfaironline.com/135149/nymc-disaster-response-center-awarded-1m-from-state/
Robert W. Amler, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs

New York Medical College Center of Excellence in Precision Responses to Bioterrorism and Disasters Awarded $1 Million In State Funding
River Journal
4/14/2021
Robert W. Amler, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs
David S. Markenson, M.D., M.B.A., medical director of the Center for Disaster Medicine

Johnson & Johnson vaccine paused: What this means for New York
Spectrum News
4/13/2021
Robert W. Amler, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president for government affairs

New York Medical College News:
New York Medical College awarded state funding for bioterrorism response
Mid-Hudson News
4/14/2021

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