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COVID-19 Newsletter (Vol. 101)

Center for Disaster Medicine, New York Medical College

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NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

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Center for Disaster Medicine



Tuesday December 28, 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 Vaccine Doses
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Worldwide	281,608,167	5,409,758	9,010,638,878
United States	52,827,097	818,395	501,133,732
New Jersey	1,453,647	28,869	14,800,203
New York	3,250,466	59,123	33,899,359
Connecticut	489,211	9,103	6,593,440

Information as of 12/28/21 at 1100 EST. Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

United States COVID-19 Case Map / GIS



Center for Disaster Medicine Updates

- Coordinating and overseeing COVID-19 screenings at NYMC campus
- Continue to partner with local organizations including 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](#)

The White House

Remarks by President Biden at COVID-19 Response Team's Regular Call with the National Governors Association- On December 27, 2021, President Biden provided an update of his conversation with governors regarding COVID-19 response.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/12/27/remarks-by-president-biden-at-covid-19-response-teams-regular-call-with-the-national-governors-association/>

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Maximizing Assistance to Respond to COVID-19- On December 27, 2021, President Biden maximized the response by federal agencies regarding the COVID-19 response.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/12/27/memorandum-for-the-secretary-of-health-and-human-services-the-secretary-of-homeland-security-and-the-administrator-of-the-federal-emergency-management-agency-on-maximizing-assistance-to-respond-to-c/>

Statement by NSC Spokesperson Emily Horne on Meeting with European Commission on COVID-19 and Global Health Security- On December 22, 2021, Senior administration officials met with European Commission counterparts on progress and next steps towards achieving the U.S.-EU Agenda for Beating the Global Pandemic Vaccinating the World, Saving Lives Now, and Building Back Better Health Security. Led by Principal Deputy National Security Advisor Jon Finer and President Ursula von der Leyen's Head of Cabinet Bjoern Seibert, both sides agreed on the importance of the transatlantic partnership and leadership to beat the pandemic, strengthen the supply chain, and strengthen global health security in the long term.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/22/statement-by-nsc-spokesperson-emily-horne-on-meeting-with-european-commission-on-covid-19-and-global-health-security/>

Press Briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and Public Health Officials- On December 22, 2021, Drs. Fauci and Walensky provided an update regarding the COVID-19 response.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/12/22/press-briefing-by-white-house-covid-19-response-team-and-public-health-officials-75/>

Statement by President Joe Biden On the FDA Emergency Authorization of the Pfizer COVID-19 Antiviral Treatment- On December 21, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration granted emergency use authorization of the Pfizer antiviral pill, a promising new treatment option that will significantly reduce hospitalization and death as we battle the more transmissible Omicron variant.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/22/statement-by-president-joe-biden-on-the-fda-emergency-authorization-of-the-pfizer-covid-19-antiviral-treatment/>

The official website of the White House will deliver updated information 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. This website will provide all information in one central location.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov>

Health and Human Services (HHS)

For the latest COVID-19 information from HHS

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

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

View the latest COVID-19 information from NIH

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

United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

As of December 23, 2021, 418 tests and sample collection devices are authorized by the FDA under emergency use authorizations (EUAs). These include 290 molecular tests and sample collection devices, 87 antibody and other immune response tests and 41 antigen tests. There are 67 molecular authorizations and one antibody authorization that can be used with home-collected samples. There is one EUA for a molecular prescription at-home test, three EUAs for antigen prescription at-home tests, 11 EUAs for antigen over-the-counter (OTC) at-home tests and three EUAs for molecular OTC at-home tests. The FDA has authorized 22 antigen tests and nine molecular tests for serial screening programs. The FDA has also authorized 738 revisions to EUA authorizations.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-december-23-2021>

On December 23, 2021, FDA Authorizes Additional Oral Antiviral for Treatment of COVID-19 in Certain Adults- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for Merck's molnupiravir for the treatment of mild-to-moderate coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in adults with positive results of direct SARS-CoV-2 viral testing, and who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death, and for whom alternative COVID-19 treatment options authorized by the FDA are not accessible or clinically appropriate. Molnupiravir is available by prescription only and should be initiated as soon as possible after diagnosis of COVID-19 and within five days of symptom onset.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-additional-oral-antiviral-treatment-covid-19-certain>

On December 22, 2021, FDA Authorizes First Oral Antiviral for Treatment of COVID-19- the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for Pfizer's Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir tablets and ritonavir tablets, co-packaged for oral use) for the treatment of mild-to-moderate coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in adults and pediatric patients (12 years of age and older weighing at least 40 kilograms or about 88 pounds) with positive results of direct SARS-CoV-2 testing, and who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death. Paxlovid is available by prescription only and should be initiated as soon as possible after diagnosis of COVID-19 and within five days of symptom onset.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-first-oral-antiviral-treatment-covid-19>

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)

On December 27, 2021, CDC Updates and Shortens Recommended Isolation and Quarantine Period for General Population- Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation from tendays for people with COVID-19 to five days, if asymptomatic, followed by five days of wearing a mask when around others. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the one to two days prior to onset of symptoms and the two to three days after. Therefore, people who test positive should isolate for five days and, if asymptomatic at that time, they may leave isolation if they can continue to mask for five days to minimize the risk of infecting others.

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

On December 23, 2021, CDC Releases Emergency Guidance for Healthcare Facilities to Prepare for Potential Omicron Surge- With the growing number of COVID-19 cases from

the Omicron variant, and consistent with current understanding of the disease trajectory, CDC is releasing updated guidance for isolation and quarantine for healthcare workers, decreasing their isolation time after infection with COVID-19. Additionally, CDC is releasing an update to guidance for contingency and crisis management in the setting of significant healthcare worker shortages.

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1223-emergency-guidance-prepare-for-omicron.html>

CDC provides updated information about the variants in the United States- 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.

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

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 8:00 p.m. ET.

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

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 December 28, 2021, the FDA has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to Moderna and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson. On August 23, 2021, the FDA granted full approval to Pfizer. Now with two vaccines with EUA and one vaccine with full FDA approval, 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 created this section regarding COVID-19 vaccinations in the United States- CDC provides overall US COVID-19 Vaccine, deliveries and administration, maps, charts, and data updated daily by 8 PM. 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>

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>

On December 27, 2021, Governor Hochul updated New Yorkers on State's Progress Combating COVID-19- Governor Kathy Hochul updated New Yorkers on the state's progress combating COVID-19. As we approach the end of the year, we must continue to stay vigilant," Governor Hochul said. "Vaccines are the way we can get through our holidays safely. If you will be attending any gatherings, exercise caution, wear your mask, and encourage those around you to get the vaccine and get the booster. Doing all of this, we will get through this and regather again at the other side, safe and healthy in 2022.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-updates-new-yorkers-states-progress-combating-covid-19-120>

On December 27, 2021, Governor Hochul Announced Excelsior Pass Now Available to Military Veterans Who Received COVID-19 Vaccines in a Veterans Affairs Facility- Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the Excelsior Pass and Excelsior Pass Plus are now available to all military veterans who received their shots at a U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs hospital or health care facility in New York. The state Office of Information Technology Services, the Division of Veterans' Services, the Department of Health, the Executive Chamber and representatives of the federal government worked together to ensure that now, nearly 117,000 currently eligible military veterans can retrieve their secure proof of vaccination from the State's Excelsior Pass platform and fully participate in the State's reopening.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-excelsior-pass-now-available-military-veterans-who-received-covid-19>

On December 24, 2021, Governor Hochul announced 13 New State Testing Sites Across New York Amid Recent Surge in COVID-19 Cases- Governor Kathy Hochul announced 13 new State testing sites to address the recent surge in COVID-19 cases. These sites are aimed providing additional testing options in areas of high need throughout the New York City, Long Island, Central New York, North Country, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley and Southern Tier regions.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-13-new-state-testing-sites-across-new-york-amid-recent-surge-covid>

On December 22, 2021, Governor Hochul signed Legislation to Improve State Response to COVID-19 Pandemic- Governor Kathy Hochul signed a package of legislation that will improve New York's response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This legislative package will take a major step forward in the State's efforts to increase vaccination rates and study the effects this pandemic has had on our economy and health care system.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-legislation-improve-state-response-covid-19-pandemic>

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.

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

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. As of October 16, 2021, the fully FDA approved Pfizer vaccine will now be known as COMIRNATY for ages 16 and older.

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

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

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

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
 - As some students across the country prepare to graduate in the coming weeks, experts are voicing concerns about the spread of the Omicron variant. COVID-19 cases have been on the rise, prompting a number of institutions to cancel in-person events and shift quickly to online final exams. University of Maryland president Darryll Pines announced via email Thursday the university would be canceling all winter commencement activities, including the main ceremony scheduled for Monday, as well as all college, school and department ceremonies scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday next week. He wrote that all winter graduates will be invited to the spring ceremony in May. “This decision was not made lightly,” Pines wrote. “We know how important this time is for our winter graduates and their families, but our first responsibility must continue to be the health and well-being of our community.” <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/12/17/winter-graduations-could-be-super-spreader-events>
 - More colleges are adopting policies to discourage—or in some cases ban—students from being on campus in January. Generally, the colleges that are acting start up the first week in January. Institutions with later starts tend to be waiting to decide. DePaul, Harvard and Stanford University students won’t have in-person classes the first weeks of the semester, those universities announced; Pennsylvania State University,

the University of California, Los Angeles, and the U of Southern California are considering such a move.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/12/21/more-colleges-move-january-programs-online>

- K-12
 - As omicron becomes the latest COVID-19 twist to upend schools' plans, several K-12 leaders shared in a virtual panel Tuesday four ways their COVID-19 testing programs successfully function: having a district testing champion, supporting school nurses, partnering with community resources and standardizing communication with families. These leaders spoke at The Rockefeller Foundation's Learning Network's final virtual panel after a series of weekly meetings to review best approaches for effectively implementing COVID-19 testing in schools. The panel was held as the omicron variant spreads and becomes the dominant COVID-19 strain in the U.S. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/4-tips-to-help-improve-covid-19-testing-in-schools/616530/>
 - As the pandemic has progressed, so have lags in learning, according to data gathered by NWEA, a research organization that creates K-12 assessments, from more than six million students in grades three to eight who took math and reading assessments. Achievement gaps between the highest- and lowest-performing students also widened for the second year in a row. Declines in achievement are steeper for fall 2021 than fall 2020 when compared to fall 2019, the last "normal" measure prior to the pandemic. Scores from fall 2021 were nine to 11 percentile points lower in math and three to seven percentile points lower in reading when compared to fall 2019, whereas scores from fall 2020 showed a decline of five to ten percentile points in math and relatively typical reading scores when compared to fall 2019 scores. Patterns in declines by subgroup also persist: Black, Hispanic, American Indian and Alaska Native and students in high-poverty schools continue to fare worse than their White, Asian and higher-income counterparts. For example, Black third-graders experienced a decline of ten percentile points in reading between fall 2019 and 2021, while White and Asian third-graders experienced drops of only five and three percentile points respectively. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/as-learning-lags-for-second-year-how-long-will-it-take-to-bounce-back/616470/>

Clinical Trials

To view the latest information on 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

- Governor Kathy Hochul announced the opening of the application period for the “Nurses For Our Future” Scholarship. The scholarship will cover tuition for 1,000 new or current healthcare workers to earn an Associate’s Degree in Nursing (ADN) or Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing (BSN) at a two-year or four-year New York State public college or university. “For the last two years, New York’s nurses have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we owe each and every one of them a debt of gratitude,” Governor Hochul said. “As we continue to fight the virus, the ‘Nurses For Our Future’ scholarship will offer an important opportunity for the next generation of nurses to receive a top-tier education and ensure they are prepared to help protect their fellow New Yorkers when they are needed the most.” Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, hospitals have been facing a labor shortage and a massive influx of patients. The Nurses For Our Future scholarship program is an important step designed to recruit and retrain nursing and health care professionals to serve in NYSRN which are most in need. There are currently more than 9,300 openings for Registered Nurses in New York State. The scholarship will mean 1,000 more students can enter a nursing program in either SUNY or CUNY. Students will be able to complete their programs with a flexible schedule, either part-time or full-time. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-applications-open-nurses-our-future-scholarship>
- Governor Hochul signed a package of legislation that will improve New York’s response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This legislative package will take a major step forward in the State’s efforts to increase vaccination rates and study the effects this pandemic has had on our economy and health care system. “We need to make sure we learn the lessons of the pandemic so we don’t make the same mistakes twice,” Governor Hochul said. “These new laws will help us improve our response to the pandemic now, crack down on fraudulent use of vaccination records, and help us better

understand the areas of improvement we need to make to our health care system so we can be even more prepared down the road."

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-legislation-improve-state-response-covid-19-pandemic>

- Governor Hochul signed an Executive Order to help support vulnerable homeowners amid the current surge of COVID-19 cases. The Executive Order allows local governments to lift an in-person renewal requirement for property tax exemptions for low-income senior citizens and persons with disabilities. "As we battle this winter surge, we are using every tool to protect our most vulnerable neighbors," Governor Hochul said. "The thousands of low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities who rely on property tax exemptions should not have to risk their health and safety to remain in their homes. With this Order, I am allowing local governments to take common sense action to protect seniors from COVID-19, provide tax relief to those who need it most, and prevent vulnerable New Yorkers from losing their homes this winter." The Governor's Executive Order includes two additional actions to support public health as New York State combats the Omicron variant and wave of cases. Amid an increased demand for testing, Governor Hochul's Order will permit certified clinical laboratories to use out-of-state facilities for New Yorkers' COVID-19 testing to mitigate testing capacity issues. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-executive-order-support-vulnerable-homeowners-amid-winter-surge>
- Governor Hochul announced that the Excelsior Pass and Excelsior Pass Plus are now available to all military veterans who received their shots at a U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs hospital or health care facility in New York. The state Office of Information Technology Services, the Division of Veterans' Services, the Department of Health, the Executive Chamber and representatives of the federal government worked together to ensure that now, nearly 117,000 currently eligible military veterans can retrieve their secure proof of vaccination from the State's Excelsior Pass platform and fully participate in the State's reopening. "As we fight the winter surge, it's more important than ever that New Yorkers get vaccinated and have access to the Excelsior Pass," Governor Hochul said. "From health care to housing, New Yorkers who served our country deserve care and respect when they return home. That's why I'm proud to announce hundreds of thousands of New York veterans will now be able to utilize the Excelsior Pass, so they can share proof of vaccination and be easily welcomed into businesses and venues across the state." <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-excelsior-pass-now-available-military-veterans-who-received-covid-19>
- Statement from Governor Hochul: "As we battle this winter surge, we will keep following the data and science-based public health policies to protect New Yorkers. "That's why on Friday I announced guidance to shorten the isolation window for our critical workforce from ten to five days, and I want to thank the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for now updating its guidance to shorten the recommended time for isolation from ten to five days for everyone who is asymptomatic, as long as they wear a well-fitting mask. "This is a critical step to support our small businesses, critical industries, and essential services as we get through this new variant."

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/12/return-to-work-isolation-guidance_12-24-21.pdf

New York State Department of Health (DOH)

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>

New Jersey

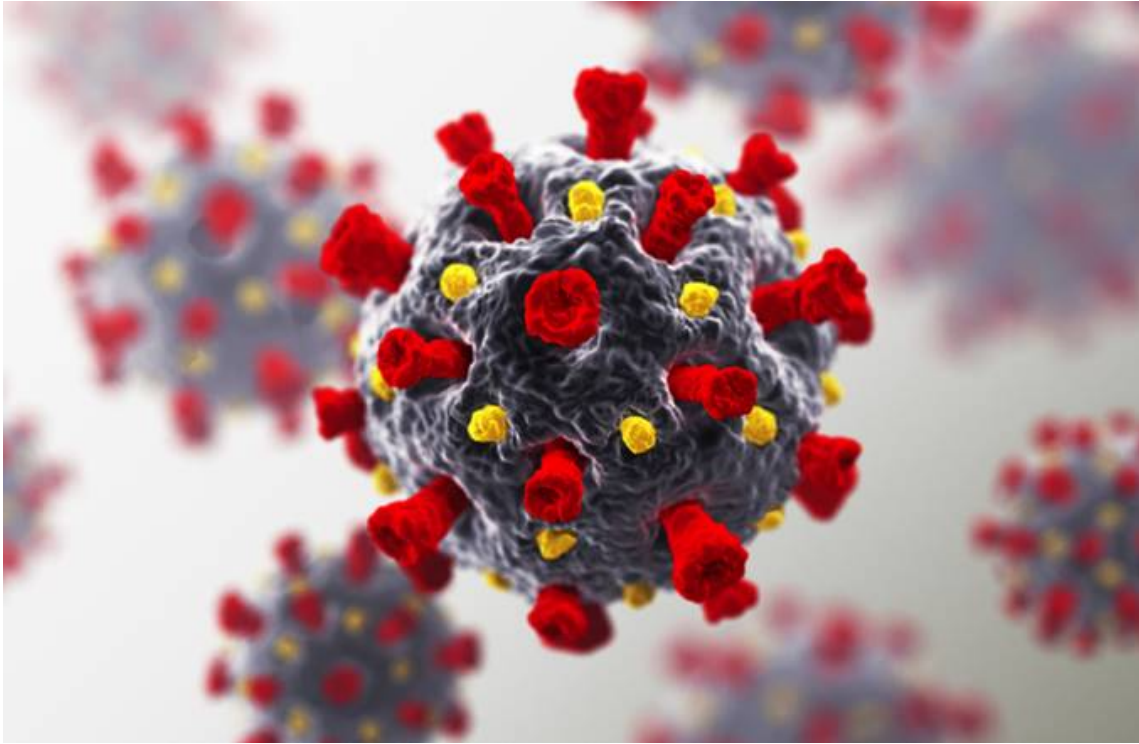
- Governor Murphy signed legislation (S-2559) that extends for the next two years the requirement adopted at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic that health benefits plans reimburse health care providers for telehealth and telemedicine services at the same rate as in-person services, with limited exceptions. At the same time, the legislation charges the Department of Health with conducting an in-depth study of the utilization of telehealth and telemedicine and its effects on patient outcomes, quality and satisfaction, and access to care in order to inform future decisions on payment structure for these services. This legislation will provide critical support to patients and providers while the State continues to address the challenges posed by the pandemic, and while the Department of Health evaluates how to best leverage payment and telemedicine to improve access to affordable care and maintain the highest quality of care possible.
<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211222c.shtml>

- To increase availability of COVID-19 testing in the state, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will establish a surge testing site in New Jersey. The site will be part of the CDC's Increasing Community Access to Testing (ICATT) for COVID-19 Surge Response effort, which partners with pharmacies and commercial laboratories to provide free testing resources to underserved communities. The New Jersey Department of Health is working with CDC officials to determine a location for the surge testing site, when a location is selected and a timeline for opening is established it will be announced to the public. "With the recent increase in COVID-19 cases, it is imperative that we remain vigilant and provide tools for our residents to stay safe," said Governor Phil Murphy. "This testing site will be an invaluable means to continue mitigating the spread of the pandemic. I thank our federal partners for their continued support and commitment to keeping New Jerseyans healthy."

<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211227a.shtml>

Connecticut

- Governor Ned Lamont announced plans to distribute three million COVID-19 at-home rapid tests and six million N95 masks in Connecticut in an effort to help curb the spread of COVID-19 during this heavy travel and holiday season. The first allocation will include the distribution of 500,000 iHealth kits – each containing two tests for a total of one million tests – that will be designated for the general public. Distribution of these kits is scheduled to begin on Thursday, December 30, 2021, and is expected to run through the following week. The Connecticut Department of Public Health, Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and Connecticut National Guard will oversee the distribution of the kits, with support from regional and local emergency management teams. This initiative also will include the distribution of N95 masks. State officials stress that details of the distribution of the kits and N95 masks are still being finalized and are subject to change this week. In addition to those designated for the general public, the state has purchased another one million iHealth kits – each containing two tests for a total of two million tests – that will be distributed to K-12 schools statewide. Distribution of those kits, which will also include a supply of N95 masks, will begin in January and continue through the school year as supplies last. Planning for this initiative is being conducted in partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education. More details on the distribution of tests for schools will be announced in early January. <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2021/12-2021/Governor-Lamont-Announces-Plans-To-Distribute-Three-Million-COVID-19-At-Home-Rapid-Tests>



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)

NYC DOHMH launched a new variants data page. The data on this page show how variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are spreading in NYC. Variants are versions of the virus with certain sets of mutations. Some variants may result in a COVID-19 infection that is easier to spread, more severe or able to avoid antibodies from vaccines or previous infections.

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

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 December 26, 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.

<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>

Putnam County Department of Health

Breakdown of positive cases by towns in Putnam County as of December 23, 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 December 27, 2021

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/covid-19-dashboard.htm>

For the latest COVID-19 information:

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.htm>

Orange County Department of Health

Updated COVID-19 dashboard for Orange County, NY as of December 25, 2021

<https://ocnygis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/21de1fb5ce0c480f95dc0cf2b8b83b71>

For the latest COVID-19 information

<https://www.orangecountygov.com/1906/2019-Novel-Coronavirus-Information>

Rockland County Department of Health

Review Rockland County's dashboard with the latest COVID-19 information regarding cases as of December 27, 2021

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d074e0336e81449393a76d1768ceb096>

For the latest COVID-19 information

<https://rocklandgov.com/departments/health/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Healthcare

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/>



Center for Disaster Medicine Media

New York Medical College Leadership News:

How to Keep Your Kids and Family Safe From the Omicron COVID-19 Variant

Very Well Health

12/20/2021

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/the-omicron-covid-19-variant-and-kids-what-you-need-to-know-5212371>

Robert W. Amler, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and vice president of government affairs

Faculty News:

“It’s not a substitute for vaccination but it will help.” Hudson Valley reacts to new Pfizer treatment

Hudson Valley News 12

12/23/21

<https://hudsonvalley.news12.com/its-not-a-substitute-for-vaccination-but-it-will-help-hudson-valley-reacts-to-new-pfizer-treatment>

Neil W. Schluger, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Chair of the Department of Medicine

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