

May 13, 2021

Summary

The United States has 32,815,408 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 583,690 reported related deaths. CDC now recommends the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for use on adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15, following FDA's decision earlier this week to extend the emergency use authorization for the vaccine to include this age group. Vaccinations for adolescents, who make up 5.3% of the U.S. population, have already begun in many states. In remarks delivered Wednesday, President Biden encouraged parents to take their eligible children to get vaccinated, noting that 3 million COVID-19 cases have been reported in children under 17 years of age. President Biden also announced that the country is about to reach the landmark of 250 million vaccine shots administered since the beginning of his term, and underscored his previously-stated goal of ensuring 70% of U.S. adults have their first vaccine dose by July 4, 2021, and having 160 million Americans fully vaccinated by the same date.

CDC announced today that Americans who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 no longer need to wear masks and social distance in most indoor and outdoor locations. CDC also announced that it has identified 28 people who developed a dangerous and rare blood clotting disorder after receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Three of those people have died.

Over the past two weeks, the United States has reported a 30% decrease in COVID-19 cases, a 17% decrease in hospitalizations, and a 10% decrease in deaths. While isolated hot spots continue to emerge in rural areas, such as parts of Colorado and New Mexico, several states, such as Michigan and New York have reported a drop of new cases by at least 40% over the last two weeks.

As of May 12, New York reported 22 deaths, 1,852 hospitalizations, and 433 COVID-19 patients in intensive care. Approximately 2,216, or 1.08%, of the 204,531 tests administered in New York were positive for COVID-19. New York has administered 17,166,220 doses of the vaccines to patients; 48.9% of New York residents have received at least one dose of the vaccines; and 40.4% are fully vaccinated. In anticipation of Memorial Day, Governor Cuomo announced that beaches and pools in New York State will operate with six-foot social distancing measures. On May 12, Governor Cuomo announced five new pop-up vaccination sites at Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority station stops in the Buffalo and Niagara Falls areas. Additionally, New York State launched a new multimedia campaign, "Reimagine, Rebuild, Renew" on May 11 that aims to support the State's economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19.

U.S. Government Updates

- [*Remarks by President Biden on the COVID-19 Response and the Vaccination Program*](#), May 12
 - In remarks delivered Wednesday, President Biden encouraged parents to take their eligible children to get vaccinated, noting that 3 million COVID-19 cases have been reported in children under 17 years of age.
 - President Biden also announced that the country is about to reach the landmark of 250 million vaccine shots administered since the beginning of his term, and underscored his previously-stated goal of ensuring 70% of U.S. adults have their first vaccine dose by July 4, 2021, and having 160 million Americans fully vaccinated by the same date.

Vaccines and Therapeutics

- [*CDC Advisers Endorse Pfizer Vaccine for Children Ages 12 to 15*](#), May 12
 - On Monday, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reviewed clinical data and authorized the Pfizer vaccine for emergency use in adolescents ages 12 to 15. Two days later, the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, an independent advisory committee to CDC, recommended the vaccine for use in the same age group. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky formally adopted the recommendation on Wednesday evening.
 - This new recommendation may speed up the return to in-person schooling for many children. Roughly one-third of eighth graders, usually 13 to 14 years old, are still learning fully remotely.
 - There are roughly 17 million 12- to 15-year-olds in the U.S., accounting for 5.3% of the population. Some states have already begun vaccinations for the age group, and many more plan to start as soon as today.
- [*CDC Says 28 Blood Clot Cases, 3 Deaths May Be Linked To Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine*](#), May 12
 - In a presentation to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices on Wednesday, CDC offered new details of its ongoing investigation into reports of a rare blood clotting issue in patients who had received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
 - CDC said that it has identified 28 people who have developed the condition, called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST). Three of the patients have died, while four remained in the hospital as of May 7, including one in the ICU. The remaining 19 patients have all been discharged.
 - The median age of the patients with CVST was 40, ranging from 18 to 59. Women ages 30 to 39 accounted for the biggest risk group. Of the 28 reported cases, 19 involved clots affecting the brain, while in the other cases clots formed in the lower extremities, pulmonary arteries, or other areas of the body.
 - FDA and CDC temporarily paused use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine on April 13, but recommended resuming use 10 days later after CDC determined that the benefits of inoculation outweighed the risks.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [*CDC Interpretation of Forecasts of New Deaths and Hospitalizations*](#), May 12
 - CDC [consolidated](#) data from 36 models projecting the COVID-19 death rate. Predicted rates differ among the forecasts, depending on assumptions about the prevalence and rigor of social distancing behaviors. CDC’s national ensemble forecast indicates that the number of newly reported COVID-19 deaths will likely decrease over the next four weeks. It predicts between 1,500 and 5,500 new deaths and between 591,000 and 602,000 cumulative deaths by June 5.
 - CDC [consolidated](#) data from 12 models projecting the number of daily COVID-19 hospitalizations. The national forecast predicts daily hospitalizations will likely decrease over the next four weeks, with between 900 and 4,400 new hospitalizations per day by June 7.
- [*C.D.C. Says Vaccinated People Can Go Maskless in Most Places*](#), May 13
 - Today, CDC announced that it now advises that Americans who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 may stop wearing masks or maintaining social distance in most indoor and outdoor settings.
 - “We have all longed for this moment,” CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said at a news conference Thursday at the White House. “If you are fully vaccinated, you can start doing the things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic.”
 - However, CDC says, vaccinated individuals should still cover their faces and physically distance when going to doctor’s offices, hospitals, or long-term care facilities like nursing homes. CDC also recommends masking when traveling by bus, plane, train, or other modes of public transportation and while in transportation hubs like airports and bus stations.
 - CDC also stressed that people must still abide by existing state, local, or tribal laws and regulations and follow rules established by businesses and workplaces.
 - CDC’s new guidance comes as it has faced increasing [criticism](#) in recent days that it has exaggerated the prevalence of COVID-19 transmission in outdoor settings.
 - Earlier this week, CDC [relaxed](#) its operations manual for cruise lines to permit passengers to remove their masks while outside.

New York State

- [*New York State COVID-19 Updates*](#), May 13
 - New York reported 22 deaths, 1,852 hospitalizations, and 433 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on May 12, 2021.
 - Approximately 2,216, or 1.08%, of the 204,531 tests administered in New York on May 12 were positive for COVID-19.
 - As of May 12, New York has administered 17,166,220 doses of the vaccines to patients; 48.9% of New York residents have received at least one dose of the vaccines; and 40.4% are fully vaccinated.
 - In anticipation of Memorial Day, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that beaches and pools in New York State will operate with six-foot social distancing measures, with the goal of reopening to 100% capacity by July 4.
 - On May 12, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) five new pop-up vaccination sites at Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority station stops in the Buffalo and Niagara Falls areas.

These sites will offer the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and will serve walk-ins on a first come, first serve basis. Additionally, beginning June 1, Sahlen Field in Buffalo will host a vaccination site as well. Any individual vaccinated there will receive a voucher for a free ticket to a Buffalo Bisons game.

- On May 11, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) the launch of a new multimedia campaign aimed at helping to support New York State's reopening and economic recovery. "Reimagine, Rebuild, Renew" will use TV ads and billboards to coincide with the reopening of industries across the State with an effort to incentivize new investments in the wake of COVID-19.

New York City

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), May 13
 - As of May 10, public libraries in New York City have [reopened](#). Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that library reopenings would help New Yorkers "prepare to enter a chapter of recovery and renewal." Additionally, City officials said they plan to open all available branch libraries in the City (except those that are undergoing renovations or being used by the City) by mid-July.

International

- Infection rates in [India](#) remain high, registering 400,000 new cases per day. On Thursday, a government panel [recommended](#) widening the gap between doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India. Recently, the Indian states of Maharashtra and Karnataka [suspended](#) vaccination altogether for people under 45 so that older people can receive second doses.
- In [Thailand](#), a coronavirus variant is suspected of fueling an outbreak in prisons that has infected nearly 3,000 inmates.
- In [Romania](#), the iconic Bran Castle in Transylvania will be administering the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to Romanian visitors. Vaccinations will be available without appointment every weekend in May and vaccine recipients will also receive "free access to the exhibition with medieval torture tools."
- On Friday, [Greece](#) will begin allowing the entry of tourists who have been vaccinated, have proof of vaccination, or can provide a negative coronavirus test result. Tourism accounts for a fifth of Greece's work force and around 20% of its GDP, and loosening tourism restrictions has been an important economic priority for the country.

Other Updates

- [For Some Anti-Vaccine Advocates, Misinformation is Part of a Business](#), May 12
 - Many anti-vaccine advocates have promoted false claims about the dangers vaccines pose while selling treatments, supplements, or other services as alternatives to vaccines, both for coronavirus and generally.
 - One of the leading anti-vaccine advocates, Joseph Mercola, is believed to earn millions of dollars each year through his companies, which sell an array of branded natural supplements.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [Annual Meetings, Compensation and COVID-19: Where Things Stand](#), April 13
- [Managing Volatility in a Pandemic? Document your Derivatives Transactions Appropriately](#), April 13
- [California Authorities Issue a Wide Range of Rules and Guidance on COVID-19](#), April 10
- [HHS Initiates Initial \\$30 Billion Distribution of the \\$100 Billion Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund](#), April 10

Send questions to:

- COVID-19-Implications@ropesgray.com