

COVID-19: CDC provides new guidance as Delta variant spikes

On Tuesday, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated information for fully vaccinated people given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant of the coronavirus currently circulating in the U.S. It added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission. Currently, Erie and Niagara counties are labeled moderate risk.

The CDC noted fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.

It added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus to be tested three to five days after exposure, and to wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status. It said children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with proper prevention strategies in place.

Recommendations were made because the CDC stated, "Infections happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. However, preliminary evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who do become infected with the Delta variant can spread the virus to others."

The aforementioned is intended

"To reduce their risk of becoming infected with the Delta variant and potentially spreading it to others."

Responses

Gov. Andrew Cuomo stated, "New Yorkers beat back COVID before – going from the highest positivity rate on the globe to one of the lowest – by staying smart, following the science, and having each other's backs, and that's exactly what we'll keep doing in this next phase of the pandemic. We are reviewing the CDC's new recommendations closely in consultation with federal and state health experts."

President Joe Biden said, "When I ran for president, I promised to be straight with you about COVID – good news or bad. And I promised to follow the science. That strategy has worked: In my first six months in office, we've given out over 300 million shots – and have 60% of adults fully vaccinated and nearly 70% started on vaccinations. Cases are down, and deaths are down dramatically. One estimate suggests that our rapid deployment of the vaccine has saved 100,000 American lives – perhaps more."

"Today's announcement by the CDC – that new research and concerns about the Delta variant leads CDC to recommend a return to masking in parts of the country – is another step on our journey to defeating this virus. I hope all Americans who live in the areas covered by the CDC guidance will follow it; I certainly will when I travel to these areas."

"Today, the CDC also reaffirmed that we can safely reopen schools this fall – full time. Masking students is inconvenient, I know, but will allow them to learn and be with their classmates with the best available protection."

Vaccinations

Elected leaders continue to ad-

vocate for coronavirus vaccinations.

Biden said, "The most important protection we have against the Delta variant is to get vaccinated. Although most U.S. adults are vaccinated, too many are not. While we have seen an increase in vaccinations in recent days, we still need to do better."

He noted, "Vaccinations are free, safe and effective to every American. They've been available to every adult in this country for more than three months – at locations within 5 miles of 90% of the US population."

"By following the science, and by doing our part by getting vaccinated, America can beat COVID. In the meantime, more vaccinations and mask wearing in the areas most impacted by the Delta variant will enable us to avoid the kind of lockdowns, shutdowns, school closures and disruptions we faced in 2020. Unlike 2020, we have both the scientific knowledge and the tools to prevent the spread of this disease. We are not going back to that."

The CDC stated, "Currently authorized vaccines in the United States are highly effective at protecting vaccinated people against symptomatic and severe COVID-19. Fully vaccinated people are less likely to become infected and, if infected, to develop symptoms of COVID-19. They are at substantially reduced risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 compared with unvaccinated people."

It noted, "Infections in fully vaccinated people (breakthrough infections) happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. Moreover, when these infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be mild."

It also said, "Although the risk

that fully vaccinated people could become infected with COVID-19 is low, any fully vaccinated person who experiences symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2 if indicated. The symptomatic fully vaccinated person should inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care."

More About Vaccinations

The CDC stated, "People who are immunocompromised should be counseled about the potential for reduced immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines and to follow current prevention measures (including wearing a mask, staying 6 feet apart from others they don't live with, and avoiding crowds and

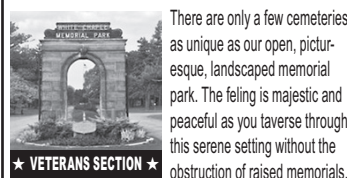
poorly ventilated indoor spaces) regardless of their vaccination status to protect themselves against COVID-19 until advised otherwise by their health care provider."

"Data suggest immune response to COVID-19 vaccination might be reduced in some immunocompromised people including, but not limited to, people receiving chemotherapy for cancer, people with hematologic cancers such as chronic lymphocytic leukemia, people receiving stem cells or organ transplants, people receiving hemodialysis, and people using certain medications that might blunt the immune response to vaccination (e.g., mycophenolate, rituximab, azathioprine, anti-CD20 monoclonal antibodies, Bruton tyrosine kinase inhibitors)."

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Superintendent acknowledges uphill battle

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local legislators, and I'll include myself and Sen. Ort, are on board with this. I think your plan to get this out early to the governor and get everyone on board is one that probably can work in this instance. I will commit to you that I will do everything I can to support this.

"And it just seems that, when it comes to the Native schools, New York state seems to forget about the fact that we stole this land from them; we did not treat them fairly. The Power Project took most of, or quite a bit of their land, and I

think it's time we all band together to try and rectify some of the inequities that have happened – and I think we start with education. You cannot treat them as second-class citizens. They are brothers. They are comrades. And we need to make sure that we protect them."

Still, Ljiljanich said he knows this will likely be an uphill battle with New York. It recently took the district three years to receive reimbursements from the state for funds used to operate the school. However, with letters already sent to state officials to begin discus-

sions on the matter, he said he's ready for that fight.

"It feels like every time we need something, it's a fight, it's a battle. And I'm not alone. All of the superintendents who are in school districts who serve Native populations are always waiting for funds, whether that's money for the operating budgets, or for capital project work," Ljiljanich said. "It's always a fight. ... That's why we're doing it now. We can't wait any longer. You saw the condition of the buildings. We can't wait longer."

OBITUARIES

Obituary: Charles (Charlie) Buddy Jones

Charles (Charlie) Buddy Jones, formerly of Lewiston, died suddenly on June 29, 2020.

He was born Oct. 20, 1940, on a farm near Windsor, Missouri, aided by a midwife, and attended a one-room schoolhouse during his childhood. Later, he earned a BS in chemical engineering at Missouri School of Mines at Rolla (now Missouri S&T).

Charlie served in the Army Corps of Engineers in Germany and the Ohio National Guard. He retired from Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. Chemical Division in Akron, Ohio, and Niagara Falls.

He was a loving, compassionate, people person. Locally, he helped to establish and manage



the family-owned ISP, WNY Internet Partners, on Center Street in Lewiston. Grandkids, Alex and Wendy, went to work on Center Street at less than 1 week old! They helped Grandpa walk to the post office and bank to take care of business. Everyone in town knew the kids because of him.

Charlie was an elder at Lewiston Presbyterian Church, where he was also heavily involved with HART. His other activities included being a 25-year member of Lewiston No. 1 Fire Co., a 32-year member of WNY Civil Air Patrol, and a pilot. In 2014, he and his wife, Barbara, moved to Happy Valley, Oregon, to be near Gena's family.

Charlie was an organ donor and his cremated remains now rest between his beloved parents, Bud and Theresa, in Windsor.

A celebration of life service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 7, at the First Presbyterian Church in Lewiston.

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