



HEALTH ADVISORY: Increase in COVID-19 Pediatric Hospitalizations Across New York State

Please distribute to the Chief Medical Officer; Departments of Pediatrics, Family Medicine, and Internal Medicine; Director of Nursing; Pharmacy Director; and primary care clinics

To: Healthcare Providers, Healthcare Facilities, Pharmacies, and Local Health Departments
From: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)

NYSDOH is closely monitoring an upward trend in pediatric hospitalizations associated with COVID-19.

- The recent increases are concentrated in New York City and the surrounding greater metropolitan area. The sharpest rise is in New York City, with admissions rising 4-fold from the week, based on data from December 5, 2021 to the week starting December 19, 2021.
- Approximately half of the admissions are <5 years of age and thus vaccine ineligible.
- For the most recent week (December 19, 2021) none of the 5-11 year-old patients was fully vaccinated (compared to 16.1% overall in that age group), and only one-quarter (23%) of 12-17 year-old patients (7 patients out of 30 admissions) were fully vaccinated (compared to 64% in that age group).

Suggested Interventions

- Enroll in New York State's vaccination program at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-information-providers>.
- Continue to strongly recommend COVID-19 vaccination for children age 5 and up and boosters for those eligible; discuss vaccination with your patients and parents at every opportunity.
- Remind parents not to assume a mild respiratory illness is a routine "cold"; test for COVID-19. Counsel parents that although COVID-19 is usually mild in children, there are risks of serious illness and sequelae for children, and if not isolated they can contribute to community transmission.
- Continue to recommend other appropriate mitigation measures such as wearing a well-fitting mask, social distancing, and avoidance of crowds.
- Emphasize the importance of isolation and quarantine to avoid spreading COVID-19 to others. Remind families that if they use a home test and get a positive result, they need to self-isolate and inform close contacts of the exposure.

Resources:

- NYS Hospitalization data: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/daily-hospitalization-summary>

- NYS Mask Mandate: https://regs.health.ny.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/emergency_regulations/Face%20Coverings%20for%20COVID-19%20Prevention.pdf
- NYS Mass Vaccination Site Scheduler: <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>
- Get vaccinated and boosted today: <https://www.vaccines.gov/>
- Find a testing site in New York State: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>
- NYS COVID data: Department's website for the latest information at: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-data-new-york> NYS hotline: 1-888-364-3065
- NYS COVID Vaccine in Children and Adolescents: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccines-children-and-adolescents>
- NYS VaxtoSchool: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/nys-vaxtoschool-pop-locations>
- CDC Holiday Guidance updated 12/9/2021 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/celebrations.html>
- CDC guidance for families updated 11/3/2021 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/about-covid-19/caring-for-children/families.html>
- CDC Mask Guidance updated 10/25/2021 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>