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Gov. Beshear, Dr. Stack: Third Dose of Pfizer, Moderna Vaccines Recommended for Immunocompromised Kentuckians

Pediatric COVID-19 hospital admissions in Kentucky reach record high

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 17, 2021) – On Tuesday, Gov. Andy Beshear announced record pediatric COVID-19 hospital admissions, and Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, announced that a third dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for immunocompromised Kentuckians at least 28 days after a second dose.

“COVID-19 isn’t just hitting adults. With the delta variant, your kids are at a greater risk than they have been before,” said **Gov. Beshear**. “In a Southern Indiana school district, 750 students are already in quarantine. Do the right thing: Get vaccinated, mask up in schools and in high-risk indoor settings. Protect our kids.”

Dr. Stack said Kentuckians with the following conditions should consider receiving a third dose:

- Active or recent treatment for cancer/malignancy;
- Solid-organ or hematopoietic stem cell transplants;
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome);
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection; and
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids, alkylating agents, antimetabolites, tumor-necrosis (TNF) blockers and other immunosuppressive medications.

“This is for individuals who may not have received adequate protection from their initial primary vaccine series. People with normal immune systems are not advised to receive an additional dose at this time,” said **Dr. Stack**. “Anyone with questions about their eligibility should talk with their health care provider.”

Individuals who have received a Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine are not recommended to receive an additional dose at this time. Third doses can be received by any COVID-19 vaccine provider that stocks the same mRNA vaccine that was used for an individual’s primary series (Pfizer or Moderna).

Kentucky’s Pediatric COVID-19 Admissions Up by More Than 400% in One Month

COVID-19 cases in Kentucky children have increased more than 400% in the last month, from 133 July 16 to 548 Aug. 16.

In addition, as of Aug. 16, Kentucky had 17 pediatric admissions for COVID-19, the state’s highest ever total. The previous highest number was 12 admissions in December 2020.

The United States is reporting [record](#) COVID-19 hospitalizations in children. Alabama has [reported](#) it only has two ICU beds still available. Mississippi public

health officials [confirmed](#) another child has died from COVID-19 complications, the state's fifth pediatric death since March 2020.

Physicians and nurses from Lake Cumberland Hospital shared a video message encouraging Kentuckians to get vaccinated. **Joseph Weigel, MD, MACP and director of medical student education at Lake Cumberland Hospital** said: "We've done so much already to protect ourselves and each other from COVID-19. Your health means everything. Get vaccinated today."

In a separate video message, **William Haugh, chief executive officer of Georgetown Community Hospital and market president of Lifepoint Health Central Kentucky**, said: "We are seeing an increase of COVID-19 patients across our hospitals as the delta variant continues to spread. We need to band together to protect our families and friends and neighbors. One of the best things you can do to combat COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. We know these vaccines work. We know they are safe. We know that a majority of the people coming through our doors with COVID-19 are not vaccinated. I encourage you to be brave. Trust the science and help our community."

COVID-19 Update

Kentuckians Vaccinated

Number of people who have received at least one vaccine dose in Kentucky:

2,425,305

Number of people vaccinated in Kentucky over the past 24 hours: **5,863**

As of Aug. 15, there were only 17 Kentucky counties where at least 50% of residents have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

From March 1 to Aug. 16, 2021, 86.8% of COVID-19 cases, 90.5% of COVID-19 hospitalizations and 87.4% of COVID-19 deaths in the state were among partially vaccinated or unvaccinated Kentuckians.

August 16, 2021 Case Information (Most Recent Available)

New Cases: 2,100

Positivity Rate: 12.40%

Hospitalizations: 1,528 (up from 1,139 Aug. 9)

Intensive Care Admittances: 429 (up from 331 Aug. 9)

On Ventilators: 224 (up from 158 Aug. 9)

Kentucky's case numbers and positivity rate have continued to rise rapidly after record lows for the past year were recorded for both metrics in June.

From Aug. 9-15, 17,935 Kentuckians were diagnosed with COVID-19, up from 13,903 the week of Aug. 2-8, and up from 1,024 the week of June 21-27 (the week the state reported its lowest number of cases in more than a year).

During the week ending Aug. 15, the state's average COVID-19 positivity rate was 12.19%, up from 10.57% the week ending Aug. 8, and up from 1.84% the week ending June 27. (The week ending June 27, the state reported its lowest positivity rate ever since adequate testing supplies have been available; the last comparable positivity rate, 2.01%, was reported the week ending May 17, 2020.)

Dr. Stack said a variety of hospitals across the state have already started canceling and postponing non-urgent, but important, surgeries and other procedures that would require admission to the hospital for overnight stays. He added that larger receiving hospitals in Kentucky are receiving calls from hospitals in Louisiana and Alabama seeking ICU beds to transfer patients to them; and reports from Oklahoma, Texas, Mississippi, Missouri and Louisiana saying there are no beds available in these states.

"Critical access hospitals in Kentucky are beginning to report difficulty getting their patients accepted at larger hospitals in Kentucky," said **Dr. Stack**. "In one instance, a hospital called 10 other hospitals and was unable to receive an accepting hospital to take their patient."

Ford Motor Company Donates 1 Million More Masks to Kentucky Kids

Following guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and support from leaders in health care, business and education, last week, the Governor issued an executive order to mandate face coverings in all of Kentucky's K-12 schools. To ensure all kids had access to masks last year, **Lt. Gov.**

Jacqueline Coleman and **First Lady Britainy Beshear** launched the Coverings for Kids initiative, which collected more than 1.8 million masks from donors.

The most significant Coverings for Kids contributor was the Ford Motor Co., which donated 1.5 million masks last year. The company also supplied 2 million masks to the state's PPE stockpile last September.

Today, First Lady Beshear announced Ford has answered the call once again by donating 1 million more masks for Kentucky children.

"As students head into this new school year – which will undoubtedly be a challenge while we battle the delta variant – I cannot overstate how important this donation is for our state," said First Lady Beshear. "Until every child can get vaccinated, masks are our greatest weapon against this virus and a vital tool to keep students and teachers safe and healthy."

Memorial

In honoring the **two late Zoneton fire leaders Major Garry Key and Chief Rob Orkies**, who both died of COVID-19, **current Zoneton Fire Chief Kevin Moulton** said: "I'm glad to be the voice of these men when I say, please get vaccinated. I know they were waiting to get vaccinated, but unfortunately the vaccine was just a few months too late. If vaccinated, life could be different: Wives would have husbands; kids would have fathers; grandkids would have grandfathers; and the Fire Department would still have mentors and leaders."

"Looking at our medical runs that we have made in the last month, they have dramatically increased because of the new delta variant and the illness that delta variant is bringing with it," he added. "As many have said, this variant is affecting our little ones and younger people more than the earlier COVID-19 strain. Please

help us as first responders protect our families and those that we protect daily. We need your help now. Please get vaccinated.”

Shot at a Million

The Governor continued to encourage all Kentuckians 12 and older to get a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine and then sign up for a chance to win \$1 million or a full college scholarship at ShotAtAMillion.ky.gov. Two \$1 million winners and 10 full-scholarship winners were announced on [July 2](#) and [July 30](#). On Aug. 27, another \$1 million winner and five more full-scholarship winners will be announced.

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