

COVID-19 BRIEFING

Updates on COVID-19 in Idaho



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

April 30, 2021

Welcome to the Department of Health and Welfare's bi-weekly briefing on the department's latest news, communications activities, and resources for the COVID-19 pandemic. New in this edition of the briefing is the latest news regarding Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine, new CDC guidance, the state's latest public service announcements about COVID-19 vaccines, and more. New sections are marked "NEW," and all other sections are up-to-date as of the time of publishing.



JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S JANSSEN VACCINE

On April 23, CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to lift the pause on the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine and resume administering it in the U.S. to everyone 18 and older. The vaccine was put on pause on April 13 after a small number of people experienced a rare blood clot. In addition to lifting the pause for Idaho vaccine providers, DHW recommends the following:

- Each community should work to ensure multiple vaccines — at least two and ideally three — are available in their community.
- Pharmacies, clinics, and vaccine providers should be transparent about which vaccines they have available.
- Patients should be made aware of the risks and benefits of each vaccine. Patients who have concerns about the vaccine being offered should be made aware of other options available in the community so they can choose the right vaccine for themselves.



NEW CDC GUIDANCE

The CDC this week announced updated guidance on mask wearing. According to CDC, both vaccinated and unvaccinated people can safely do the following without wearing a mask: walk, run, roll, or bike outdoors with members of their household, and attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends. Fully vaccinated people can now do the following without masks: attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people, and dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households. See [CDC's website](#) for more information.

Also according to CDC, fully vaccinated people can visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with other fully vaccinated people of any age; visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with one household of unvaccinated people who are not at risk for severe illness; and travel domestically without pre- or post-travel test, and without quarantining. See [CDC's website](#) for more information.

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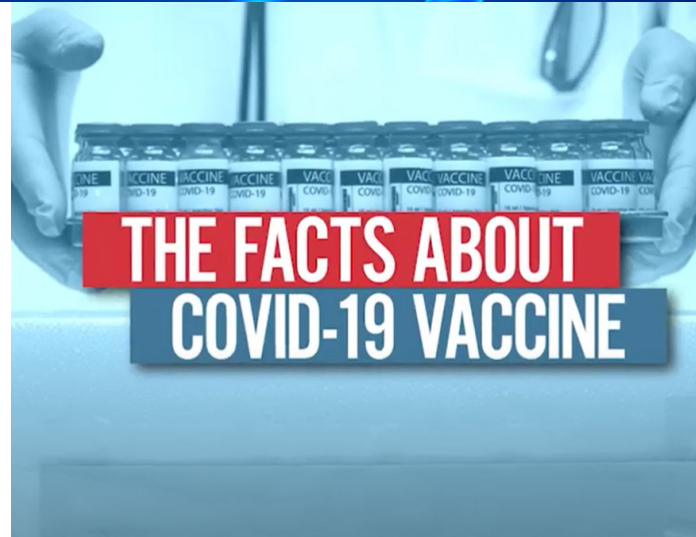
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VACCINE CONFIDENCE TV SPOTS

The state has produced seven public service announcements aimed at promoting confidence in COVID-19 vaccines by focusing on safety and efficacy.

Two of the ads debuted over the past several weeks: one features Boise-based [Dr. Aaron Campbell](#), and [the other](#) focuses on the facts about COVID-19 vaccine.



COVID-19 VARIANTS OF CONCERN IN IDAHO

New information on COVID-19 variants of concern in Idaho is now displayed on the [COVID-19 Case, Laboratory, and Hospital Data Dashboard](#) under the laboratory testing tab. The dashboard now shows the number of confirmed variants of concern by type of variant, as well as an interactive map of Idaho showing the counties in which variants of concern have been detected.



BREAKTHROUGH CASES

Breakthrough cases refer to COVID-19 infections of people at least 14 days after becoming fully vaccinated. As of April 28, there have been 190 breakthrough cases in Idaho, one of which resulted in death. Data on breakthrough cases can be found on the [COVID-19 Case, Laboratory, and Hospital Data Dashboard](#) under the statewide demographics tab.



COVID-19 STATISTICS

As of April 28, 1,036,536 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Idaho. A total of 471,095 people are fully vaccinated.

As of April 28, there have been 187,269 cases of COVID-19 and a total of 2,045 COVID-19-related deaths in Idaho.

Over the past week, the counties seeing the highest COVID-19 infection rates in Idaho include Elmore, Boise and Ada. Those counties have been seeing 7-day moving average incident rates of 20.3, 16.4, and 14.3 per 100,000 people respectively.

COVID-19 statistics can be found on the [COVID-19 Case, Laboratory, and Hospital Data Dashboard](#). Case data is now updated Monday through Friday by 5 p.m., hospitalization data is updated Monday, Wednesday, and Friday by 5 p.m. and percent positivity testing data is updated by 5 p.m. MT on Thursdays.

Also on the coronavirus website is the [COVID-19 Vaccine Data Dashboard](#). It includes data on COVID-19 vaccinations by county, public health district, age group, race, and ethnicity; information about pre-registrations for COVID-19 vaccine appointments, and an interactive tool that shows how long it will take to vaccinate a given percentage of Idaho's population, among other data. The dashboard updates Monday through Friday by 1 p.m. (not including holidays).

DHW SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

DHW social media posts continue to communicate the latest information about the COVID-19 pandemic and rollout of vaccine.

Recent campaigns are sharing the latest CDC guidance, communicating information on how and where to get vaccinated, and highlighting the latest COVID-19 vaccine-related news and statistics.



COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION ONLINE

The [COVID-19 vaccination information web page](#) includes information on when and where to get vaccinated, and what to expect at a vaccine appointment.

The [COVID-19 vaccine section](#) COVID-19 vaccine section on the coronavirus website is updated frequently. The page includes a comprehensive FAQ that is updated weekly, information on how to volunteer during the pandemic, recordings of DHW's media briefings, and a schedule of meeting dates for the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), among other resources.

There is also a link available with [COVID-19 vaccine providers](#).

BUSTING COVID-19 MYTHS

MYTH: Minors can get a COVID-19 vaccine in Idaho without parental consent

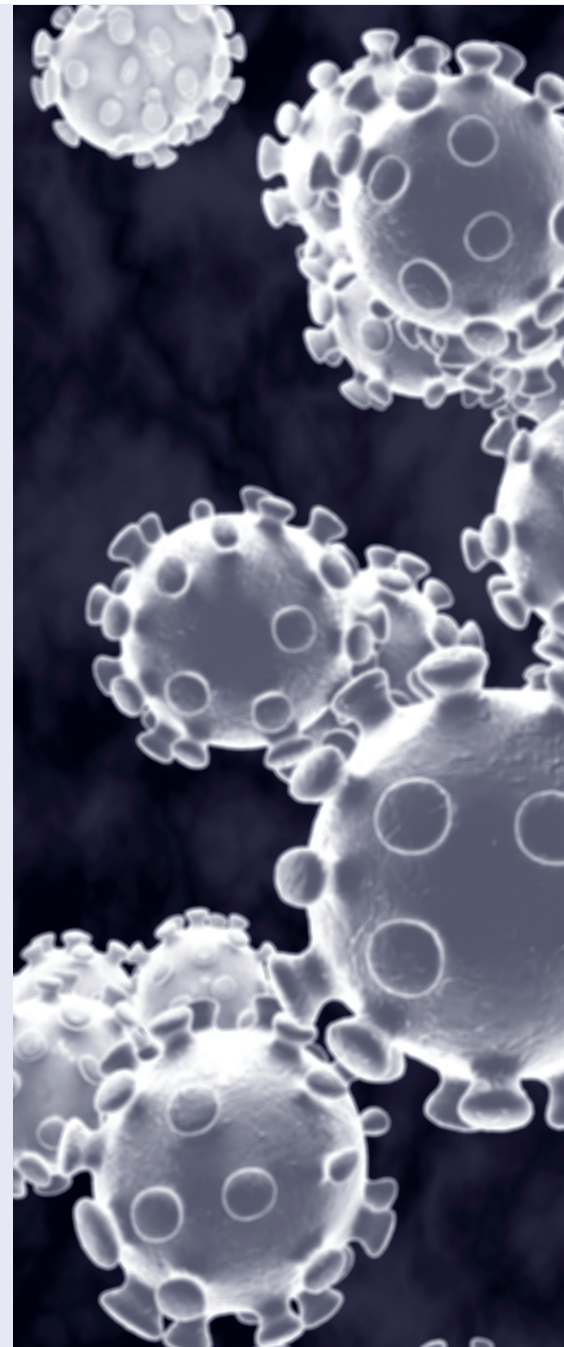
FACT: So far, only the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has emergency use authorization to be given to anyone 16 years of age or older.

In Idaho, minors must have consent from a parent or guardian to receive a vaccination unless the minor meets a statutory exemption or obtains court approval to provide their own consent. Vaccine providers should consult with their legal counsel if they do not intend to require parental consent from minors. The bottom line is it's up to healthcare providers to determine if the minor has the ability to consent to their own care.

MYTH: COVID-19 vaccinations are or will soon be mandated by the government.

FACT: The vaccine is absolutely not mandated by local, state, or federal government, though private companies may impose vaccine requirements.

In early April, Gov. Brad Little signed an [executive order](#) banning any state of Idaho governmental entity from requiring so called "vaccine passports" or proof of COVID-19 vaccination in order for citizens to receive public services or access facilities.





COVID-19 SUPPORT GROUP

DHW in conjunction with Empower Idaho, is offering a series of virtual, interactive support groups for all Idahoans interested in learning how to cope with the challenges and stress of a year of COVID-19. The group meets every other Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. MDT (11:30 a.m. PDT) for up to an hour. [Registration is required.](#)

The series will end on June 29. See a [press release](#) for more information.



SCHOOLS

The summary of COVID-19 cases associated with schools in Idaho is published on the [coronavirus website](#) on Mondays under the [“Schools” tab](#).



LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

The summary of COVID-19 cases associated with long-term care facilities in Idaho is published on the [coronavirus website](#) on Fridays under the [“Long-Term Care” tab](#).



WEEKLY MEDIA BRIEFINGS

DHW has hosted weekly media briefings about COVID-19 vaccine every Tuesday at 2:30 p.m. since Jan. 5. After the April 27 briefing, the briefings are switching to a new schedule and will be held every other week. The next scheduled briefing is on May 11. The remote events have included updates from Gov. Little and DHW officials, followed by a question-and answer session with members of the media.

For more information about the briefings, see a [press release](#). [Recordings](#) of past media briefings are posted on the coronavirus website.

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NEW
INFORMATION

COMMUNICATIONS FORUM MOVES TO MONTHLY MEETINGS

DHW's Office of Communications, in partnership with the Gov. Brad Little's communications director, created a forum for communications professionals in state agencies, health districts, healthcare agencies and facilities, and stakeholders to meet every other Monday to discuss COVID-19-related communications efforts and strategies. Starting in May, the forum will meet monthly; the next meeting is on May 24. If you are a communications professional and would like to join the call, send an email to communications@dhw.idaho.gov.