

# COVID-19 BRIEFING

Updates on COVID-19 in Idaho



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH & WELFARE

November 17, 2021

Welcome to the Department of Health and Welfare's (DHW) monthly briefing on the department's latest news, communications activities, and resources for the COVID-19 pandemic.

New sections are marked "NEW," and all other sections are up to date as of the time of publishing.

NEW  
INFORMATION

## IDAHO CHILD DIES FROM COVID-19

DHW confirmed the death of a child due to COVID-19 in October. The child was an infant (younger than 12 months) and lived in the Southwest District Health area.

To protect the privacy of the child's grieving family, no further details were released to the public.

"Our hearts go out to the family of this child," said Elke Shaw-Tulloch, administrator for the Idaho Division of Public Health. "Infection with the virus can have devastating impacts on families, and this situation highlights the seriousness of COVID-19."

Nearly 900 COVID-19-related deaths have been reported among children in the U.S. since the start of the pandemic.

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for parents and prospective parents, including pregnant women, who may also receive a COVID-19 vaccine [booster shot](#). Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can protect parents and prospective parents from severe illness from COVID-19, which can help protect babies and children who are too young to be vaccinated.

NEW  
INFORMATION

## COVID-19 VACCINE NOW RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN AGES 5-11 YEARS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended two doses of the [Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 Pediatric Vaccine](#) for children ages 5-11.

Like the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for people ages 12 years and older, the two doses are administered at least 21 days apart. However, the pediatric vaccine for 5-11-year-olds is a different formulation and dose size than the vaccine for ages 12 years and older and requires different storage and handling practices.

To find a vaccination location near you, contact your child's pediatrician, visit [Vaccines.gov](#), or contact your [local public health district](#).

For more information about pediatric COVID-19 vaccination, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html> or speak with your child's pediatrician.





NEW  
INFORMATION

### IDAHO IS UNDER CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE STATEWIDE



## WHEN WILL IDAHO BE ABLE TO EXIT CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE?

The short answer to that question is that Idaho will deactivate crisis standards of Care when the surge of COVID-19 patients ends and the number of patients no longer exceeds the healthcare resources available. Below are a few examples that will let us know we can leave crisis standards of care:

- Non-clinical or non-traditional spaces or rooms are no longer being used to care for patients within hospital and healthcare systems settings
- Patients who should be admitted to the hospital are admitted to traditional hospital rooms, and are no longer being kept for long periods in emergency rooms
- Instead of large hospitals transferring patients to small hospitals, we can return to normal where small hospitals can transfer critical care patients to large hospitals as needed
- At least some postponed, less critical surgeries can continue (we are starting to see this happen in some hospitals in Idaho)
- Staff-to-patient ratios can return to normal
- The trend of new cases and hospitalizations continues to decline

When the situation changes in Idaho, crisis standards of care will be deactivated, and DHW will issue a press release.

NEW  
INFORMATION

## COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE, EFFECTIVE, AND RECOMMENDED FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

It is safe for pregnant women to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Getting the vaccine causes the body to create protective antibodies for both the mom and baby. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a panel of experts have concluded that the vaccine is safe for pregnant women and their babies.

Why is this vaccine important for pregnant and recently pregnant women?

- Pregnant and recently pregnant women are more likely to get severely ill with COVID-19 compared with women who are not or who have not recently been pregnant and should strongly consider vaccination.
- Evidence about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy has been growing. These data suggest that the benefits of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine outweigh any known or potential risks of vaccination during pregnancy.
- There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.
- There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta.

More information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/pregnancy.html>.



NEW  
INFORMATION

# BREAKTHROUGH CASES ARE A NORMAL PART OF ALL VACCINES

The COVID-19 vaccine is an important tool against the pandemic. However, no vaccine for any disease is 100 percent effective at preventing illness. DHW tracks cases among Idahoans who have contracted COVID-19 after they are fully vaccinated (i.e. breakthrough cases). Breakthrough cases are expected, and do not mean that the vaccine is ineffective.

In Idaho, there have been 157,541 cases of COVID-19 reported during 2021, of which 17,099 have been breakthrough cases. That means that 10.9 percent of all cases in 2021 have been breakthrough cases. However, looking at the data this way can sometimes be distorted by the number of people vaccinated vs. the number of people not fully vaccinated.

A better way to look at the data is to look at the number of breakthrough cases among those who are fully vaccinated. This is a better measure since it tells you directly, if you get vaccinated, how likely you are to get a breakthrough case. In Idaho, there are 846,056 people who are fully vaccinated as of Nov. 15, 2021, of which 17,099 have experienced a breakthrough case. That means 2 percent of fully vaccinated people have experienced a breakthrough case. Or said differently, 98 percent of fully vaccinated people haven't experienced a breakthrough case.

The COVID-19 vaccines are proven safe and effective. More than 195 million people in the United States and 846,056 in Idaho have been fully vaccinated as of Nov. 15, 2021 (fully vaccinated includes people who have received two doses of Moderna or the Pfizer vaccine or a single dose of the Janssen vaccine).

The vaccines are particularly effective against hospitalization and death. That means the benefit of the COVID-19 vaccine is multi-layered. First, it greatly reduces your chances of getting COVID-19 in the first place. But if you do have a breakthrough case, it then further reduces the likelihood that you will be sick enough to have to go to the hospital or die.

If you are fully vaccinated and have a breakthrough case of COVID-19 you are 5 times less likely to go to the hospital and 3.5 times less likely become infected in the first place.

You can catch COVID-19 even if you get the vaccine. Nothing is 100 percent safe or effective. However, having the vaccine greatly reduces your chances of getting COVID-19. Even if you do get a breakthrough case, the vaccine further reduces your chances of being hospitalized or dying. And, there is another way to think about the vaccine – getting a vaccine is like wearing a seatbelt. You may still be in a car accident, but the seatbelt can protect you from serious injury.





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NEW  
INFORMATION

## DHW PROVIDES ACCURATE INFORMATION EVERY DAY TO HELP COMBAT COVID-19 MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

One of the issues that all government and healthcare organizations face during the pandemic is the abundance of false and misleading information available on social media and other communications channels.

DHW remains focused on delivering accurate and up-to-date information daily through the following channels:

- Social media - [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#)
- [DHW Voice blog](#) (new posts on Tuesdays and Fridays)
- [Weekly COVID-19 media briefings](#)
- [Coronavirus website](#) and [DHW website](#)
- Daily responses to information requests from the public and the media
- Public Service Announcements

At DHW, we follow up on misinformation and disinformation by sharing accurate and up-to-date information in our blog posts and other channels. Below are some of the topics we addressed due to questions raised on social media.

### Was the development of COVID-19 vaccine rushed?

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated in tens of thousands of participants in clinical trials. The vaccines met the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support approval or authorization of a vaccine.

Over 442 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been given in the United States under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history.

The COVID-19 vaccines were created with a method that has been in development for years, so the companies could start the vaccine development early in the pandemic. The vaccine developers didn't skip any testing steps but conducted some of the steps on an overlapping schedule to gather data faster.

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## DHW PROVIDES ACCURATE INFORMATION EVERY DAY TO HELP COMBAT COVID-19 MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

### Do breakthrough cases mean the COVID-19 vaccine doesn't work?

A COVID-19 vaccination breakthrough case is when someone who is fully vaccinated tests positive for COVID-19 more than 14 days after getting the second dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccines, or more than 14 days after getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The vaccines are working. They are especially effective against hospitalization and death, and they greatly reduce your chances of getting COVID-19 in the first place. If you do have a breakthrough case, it further reduces the likelihood that you will be sick enough to have to go to the hospital or die.

Read more about breakthrough cases:

- <https://dhwblog.com/2021/11/02/covid-19-qasome-covid-19-infections-in-vaccinated-peopleare-expected/>
- <https://dhwblog.com/2021/10/29/from-dhw-director-dave-jeppesen-thefacts-about-breakthrough-cases-they-are-anormal-part-of-all-vaccines-and-are-not-evidencethat-vaccines-do-not-work/>

### Have there been deaths and injury to Idahoans caused by the COVID-19 vaccine?

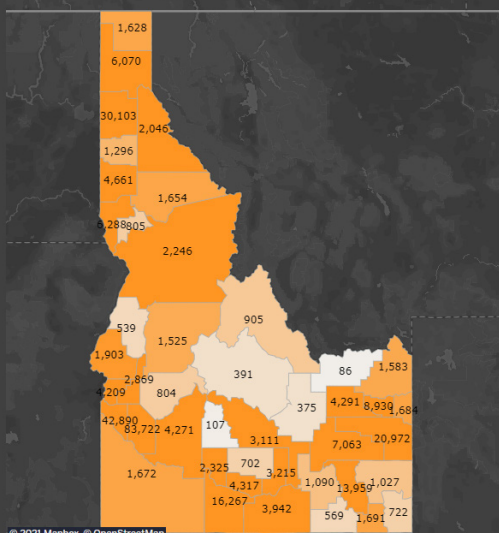
In Idaho, no death certificate has identified the COVID-19 vaccine as the underlying cause of death in 2020 and 2021. The “underlying cause of death” means the actual event or disease that caused the death.

We have had six deaths in people ranging from 69 to 86 years of age, for whom the death certificates mentioned the COVID-19 vaccine. All of those death certificates identified other underlying causes of death such as cancer and heart disease. Two listed the vaccine as a potential complication. The others just noted the person had received a COVID-19 vaccine.

Read more here:

<https://dhwblog.com/2021/10/22/from-dhw-directordave-jeppesen-correcting-misinformation-about-covid-19-vaccines-and-a-reminder-to-take-our-covid-19-impact-survey/>

Cumulative Cases by County



## COVID-19 DATA ONLINE

COVID-19 statistics, including breakthrough cases and vaccination status of cases, can be found on the [COVID-19 Case, Laboratory, and Hospital Data Dashboard](#). State-level case, laboratory, and hospital data is updated by 5 p.m. MT every day, excluding Sundays and holidays. Data on variants of concern and percent positivity is updated by 5 p.m. MT on Thursdays.

The [COVID-19 Vaccine Data Dashboard](#) includes data on COVID-19 vaccinations by county, public health district, age group, race, and ethnicity.



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## DHW SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

DHW continues to target misinformation and disinformation on all of our social media platforms, and on our blog at [dhwblog.com](http://dhwblog.com). Posts continue to debunk the latest vaccine-related myths, and share information about where to get vaccinated as well as daily updates on percent positivity, case counts, and vaccination milestones.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

**COVID-19  
PEDIATRIC  
VACCINE  
UPDATE**



**PREGNANCY  
AND COVID-19**



**WE TRUST EXPERTS  
WHEN WE NEED HELP.**



**Flu season is here.  
Protect yourself.**

*Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.*



## COVID-19 VACCINATION 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](#) on the coronavirus website is updated regularly. The page includes the comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine FAQ, recordings of DHW's media briefings, a list of underlying medical conditions that put people at greater risk for COVID-19, and the Governor's actions, among other resources. There is also a link available with resources for COVID-19 vaccine providers.

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## SCHOOLS

Updated weekly summaries of COVID-19 cases associated with schools are available each Monday on the coronavirus website under the [“Schools” tab](#).

## MEDIA BRIEFINGS

DHW hosts regular briefings for the media about COVID-19 in Idaho. The remote events have included updates from Gov. Little and DHW officials, followed by a question-and answer session with members of the media. The general public can listen in.

For more information about the briefings, visit [coronavirus.idaho.gov](https://coronavirus.idaho.gov), and watch the department’s [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts for announcements. Recordings of past media briefings are posted on the coronavirus website under the vaccine tab.



## COMMUNICATIONS FORUM

DHW’s Office of Communications, in partnership with Gov. Brad Little’s communications director, hosts a forum for communications professionals in state agencies, health districts, healthcare agencies and facilities, and stakeholders to discuss COVID-19-related communications efforts and strategies. If you are a communications professional and would like to join the call, send an email to [communications@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:communications@dhw.idaho.gov).



## LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

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