

CORONAVIRUS NEWS BRIEF

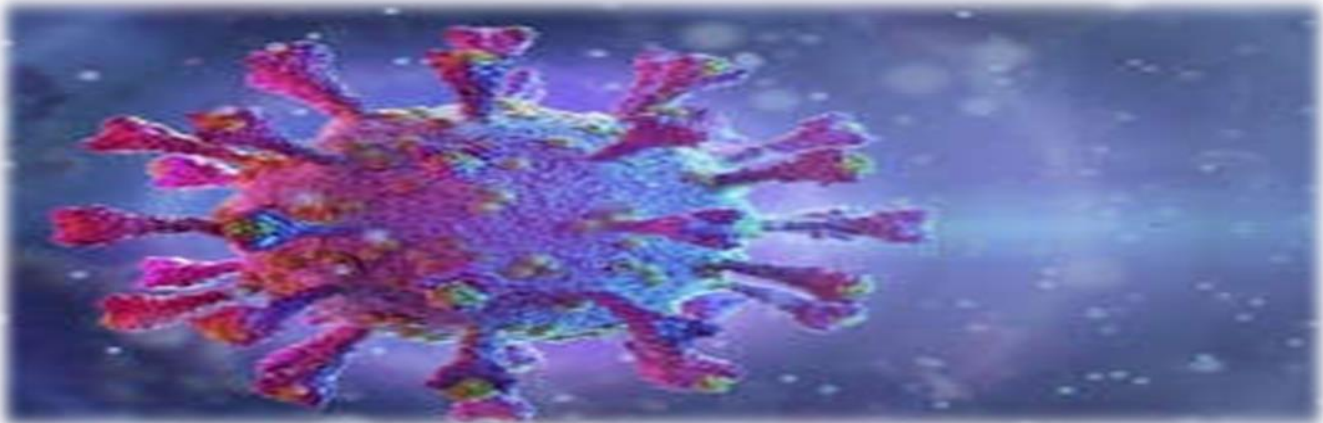
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Third grade dual-language students wear masks on the first day of school at Montara Avenue Elementary School in Los Angeles, California.

Pfizer's clinical data puts the US one step closer to a Covid-19 vaccine for younger kids. : Report Page 2.

Pfizer's clinical data puts the US one step closer to a Covid-19 vaccine for younger kids.



A Food and Drug Administration review this week determined that Pfizer-BioNTech's Covid-19 vaccine is safe and effective for children ages 5 to 11, paving the way for a shot to be authorized for that age group as soon as early November.

Pfizer also announced on Friday that the vaccine is more than 90 percent effective at protecting school-age children from serious illness or hospitalization from Covid-19, similar to the level of protection it provides in adults.

The FDA analysis looked at data from Pfizer clinical trials in four different scenarios and concluded that any risks — in particular, a vaccine-related pediatric myocarditis that typically lasts a few days — were negligible in comparison to the benefits for the age group.

Previous data from Pfizer showed that young children were able to tolerate the vaccine well and produced a strong immune response, and the results of Friday's FDA review are further confirmation of its effectiveness.

The 2,268 children ages 5 through 11 in Pfizer's clinical trials received doses a third the size of an adult vaccine dose, spaced 21 days apart.

Now that the initial review is complete, there are just a few steps left before Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine can be authorized for the approximately 28 million American children ages 5 through 11.

Next week, the FDA's panel of independent experts will examine the research and make specific recommendations to the FDA about administering the Pfizer vaccine to this age group.

Much as with recommendations about booster shots, the advisory committee is able to offer specific, granular guidance about the vaccine's safety and necessity. For example, in September of this year, after the Biden administration had planned a widespread rollout of vaccine boosters, the FDA panel recommended that only certain populations receive an additional shot.

However, as Vox's Dylan Scott points out, "the groups already okayed by the FDA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for booster shots are quite broad and cover much of the adult population."

The FDA panel will meet Tuesday and offer FDA leadership its assessment. The FDA typically follows the advice of its expert panel, but its guidance isn't binding.

If the advisory committee's advice conforms with the agency's initial review of the data, the FDA will likely authorize the vaccine soon after.

After that, Pfizer then must present its data to the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices or ACIP. It's a similar body to the FDA's advisory committee — a rotating, independent panel of scientists and other experts who can make specific recommendations to the CDC about administering the vaccine. That panel is scheduled to meet November 2 and 3 to discuss pediatric vaccines, according to CNN.

Then, ultimately, it's up to CDC director Dr. Rochelle Walensky to guide the CDC's decision on pediatric Covid-19 vaccines. As with the FDA's advisory body, ACIP's recommendations aren't binding, but the CDC typically follows them.

have to authorize the vaccine; the FDA is first and foremost concerned with the safety of anything submitted for emergency use authorization or full regulatory approval. That means asking not only whether the drug itself is safe, but also inspecting manufacturing facilities and practices while the drug in question is licensed. Meanwhile, the CDC's concerns are geared more toward how the drug should be administered and to whom, in addition to its safety and efficacy.

As the White House waits for authorization, President Joe Biden announced a plan earlier this week to distribute pediatric vaccines in 25,000 pediatrician's and primary care offices, as well as in children's hospitals and school- and community-based clinics.

The administration has already purchased enough doses to inoculate all children in this age group; the shots come in reconfigured packaging, with smaller needles for smaller arms.

“Kids have different needs than adults and our operational planning is geared to meet those specific needs, including by offering vaccinations in settings that parents and kids are familiar with and trust,” Jeff Zients, the White House’s Covid-19 response coordinator, told reporters on Wednesday.

The plan aims to avoid the bumpy, chaotic rollout adults faced earlier this year, as well as to build trust with families who may be hesitant to vaccinate their children by relying heavily on trusted sites like pediatrician’s offices, and messaging through schools. Children aren’t as vulnerable to Covid-19 as adults, but they’re still testing positive

The likely authorization of Pfizer’s Covid-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 stands to make schools a much safer place as Covid-19 continues to spread in the US.

Though children don’t often experience symptoms from Covid-19, as Vox’s German Lopez explained earlier this month, the combination of the delta variant and a return to classrooms last month resulted in a sharp rise in pediatric Covid-19 cases relative to earlier in the pandemic.

According to the the American Academy of Pediatrics, almost 6.2 million children have tested positive for Covid-19 since the pandemic began. In just the six weeks prior to October 14, 1.1 million children tested positive.

About 280 children under the age of 18 died of Covid-19 between January and September this year, according to Lopez.

“In this latest wave of Covid-19, particularly down south, there have been thousands of children hospitalized. And, frankly, it’s an embarrassment in a developed country to have even 100 children, like we’ve had, die of infectious disease that’s preventable,” Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said at a town hall earlier this month.

Since US school districts have implemented a patchwork quilt of vaccine and mask recommendations — with some states like Texas and Florida ignoring scientific evidence on the efficacy of masking and banning mask and vaccine mandates in school systems — both students and teachers are vulnerable to the illness.

And despite the eagerness of many children, teachers, and parents to get students back in the classroom, high

infection rates across the US mean there have been some stops and starts, from quarantining exposed students to shutting down whole campuses after an outbreak. Vaccinating school children would help reduce the virus’s spread — not to mention reduce the number of disruptions to the school year.

Despite the upsides, however, some parents say they are still wary of vaccinating their children, or will opt not to do so. According to a September study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, only about a third of parents surveyed — 34 percent — said they would vaccinate their 5- to 11-year-olds as soon as that age group becomes eligible. Thirty-two percent said they would “wait and see” how well the vaccine works before having their child get the shot, and 24 percent said they wouldn’t have their children vaccinated at all. More vaccines for more children are likely coming soon

The authorization of a Covid-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 would mean that nearly everyone in the US is eligible for a vaccine, and drug companies are already making headway on shots for even younger children.

Pfizer, which along with BioNTech manufactures the only vaccine authorized for use in children under 18, is also performing clinical trials on children ages 2 to 5, and separate trials for children as young as six months. Data from those trials is expected before the end of the year, according to Pfizer.

Moderna, which manufactures the other mRNA vaccine authorized for US adults, is also recruiting for its pediatric clinical trials on children ages 6 months to 11 years. The company submitted its clinical trial data on the vaccine’s effectiveness in teenagers ages 12 to 18 in June, but the FDA has pressed pause on authorizing it due to a possible elevated risk of myocarditis in young men.

Health authorities in Sweden and Denmark have stopped administering Moderna vaccines to people under 18 in those countries due to this possible elevated risk.

With more authorizations on the horizon, many parents will likely be relieved to add Covid-19 shots to their kids’ vaccination schedules:

As Friday’s FDA review confirmed, the vaccine is safe and effective for young children, and the Biden administration plans to make it widely available as soon as it’s authorized. And if Covid-19 is something we’ll have to live with as a society, as experts increasingly believe, then getting one step closer making the Covid-19 vaccine routine for young kids is very good news indeed.

People who've had COVID-19 are facing memory problems months after contracting the disease, new study says: 'They can't think'.



A new study reveals that people who've had COVID-19 in the past may exhibit cognitive impairments months after an infection.

Those impairments can include problems with memory, as well as slower processing speed.

One of the longterm effects of COVID-19 is "brain fog," or difficulty thinking and concentrating, the CDC says. People who've recovered from the coronavirus are experiencing problems with their memory, new research and data reveal.

A study, published Friday in medical journal JAMA Network Open, says nearly a quarter of individuals who've been infected with the coronavirus have problems retaining information and focusing months after contracting the disease. Researchers, examining 740 patients at the Mount Sinai Health System in New York, found that it's relatively common for people who've had COVID-19 before to struggle with things like multitasking. "In this study, we found a relatively high frequency of cognitive impairment several months after patients contracted COVID-19. Impairments in executive functioning, processing speed, category fluency, memory encoding, and recall were predominant among hospitalized patients," Jacqueline Becker and other researchers at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York said, according to the study. The patients were tested between April 2020 and May 2021, the study says. They were all at

least 18 years old and had no history of dementia. Researchers found that the patients, about seven or eight months after having contracted the disease, exhibited signs of cognitive impairment.

That includes problems with memory recall and the ability to store new memories, the study says, as well as with making judgment calls and planning.

Some of these patients "cannot function," psychiatry professor Dr. Helen Lavretsky told NBC News. "They can't think; their memory is impaired; they get confused when they drive places, that they don't know how they got there."

The research showed that patients most likely to show signs of cognitive impairment had been hospitalized for COVID-19. But some patients who received treatment in the emergency department of the hospital also presented with a decrease in brain function.

One of the longterm effects of COVID-19 is "brain fog," or difficulty thinking and concentrating, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Although most people with COVID-19 get better within weeks of illness, some people experience post-COVID conditions," the CDC website says. "Post-COVID conditions are a wide range of new, returning, or ongoing health problems people can experience four or more weeks after first being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19."

US CDC approves

Moderna, J&J shots, mix-match doses

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended Moderna and Johnson & Johnson's Covid booster doses and has given the freedom for people to mix and match the third shot.

"Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some people may have a preference for the vaccine type that they originally received and others may prefer to get a different booster. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots," the agency said in a statement late on Thursday.

The boosters were unanimously recommended by the CDC during its vaccine advisory's two-day meeting held between October 20-21.

It was approved by the Food and Drug Administration's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee last week.

Moderna's booster shots were recommended for elderly people and at-risk adults six months after they complete their primary series of shots, similar to Pfizer's booster.

But unlike Pfizer Moderna has been recommended for only half-dose booster to bolster protection against the virus.

The agency also endorsed J&J boosters for everyone 18 and older who received the initial shot at least two months ago.

"These recommendations are another example of our fundamental commitment to protect as many people

as possible from Covid-19. The evidence shows that all three Covid-19 vaccines authorised in the US are safe — as demonstrated by the over 400 million vaccine doses already given," said Rochelle P. Walensky, CDC Director, in the statement.

"And, they are all highly effective in reducing the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, even in the midst of the widely circulating Delta variant," Walensky added. The 'mix and match' approach may help nearly 15 million people who got the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine and more than 39 million Moderna recipients. It will also provide flexibility to doctors and other vaccinators.

While the approval makes millions of people eligible to receive a booster shot and to benefit from additional protection, "it should not distract from the critical work of ensuring that unvaccinated people take the first step and get an initial Covid-19 vaccine", the statement said.

According to the CDC, more than 65 million Americans remain unvaccinated, making them vulnerable for the infectious disease.

Three vaccines have been to date authorised for use against Covid in the US: Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson.

However, several studies have pointed out that the effectiveness of the two-dose vaccine against infection wanes over time, stressing the need for booster doses.

(Editor's note: For helping people and communities, voluntary institutions (NGO's) in India, Please donate generously specifically for Coronavirus Pandemic and other humanitarian causes. Please use your common sense to donate to the right organization. If possible, give priority to your own family, neighbors and your village/Town or area healthcare systems directly.

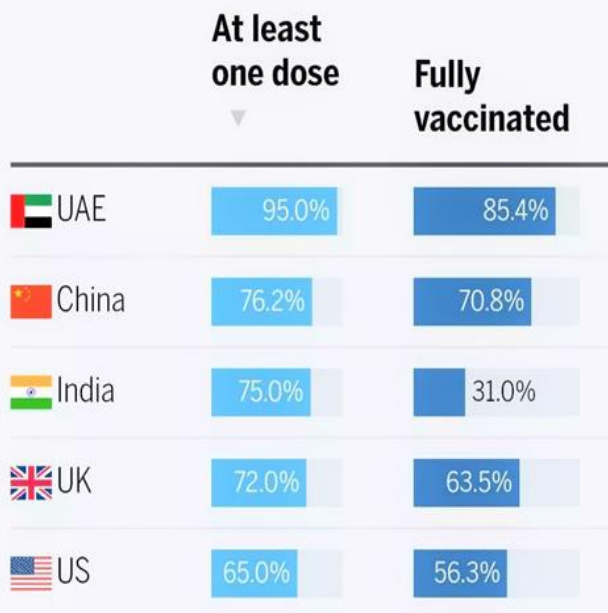
There are fraudulent organizations be aware of them. Look into the need and response to those priorities. Get some advice from your Doctors or helping organizations. Many time Cash Donations are more effective than kind. I would recommend donating to Red Cross of India, UNICEF, Oxfam India, and Care India. In my personal opinion, do not send any contributions to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi's PM Care Fund as its not transparent and has no accountability, and is a private charity. -Kaushik Amin).

India: A billion shots...

A billion: India Thursday marked a billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines administered since it began the immunization program on January 16. The milestone marks a turnaround for the country after the slow pace in the early months hampered the pandemic response.

Where India stands on vaccine coverage

Though India has boosted its vaccination programme, it still lags in terms of coverage when compared to other nations around the world



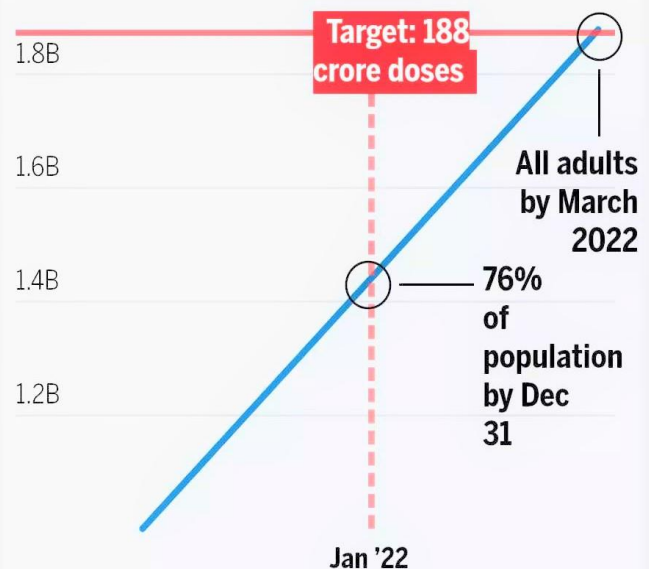
One dose: A bulk of those were the scheduled first dose. Just over 70% of the adult population in India has received at least one dose of vaccine, and just 30% are fully vaccinated.

A slip: While the return to centralized procurement of vaccines — a decision forced by the Supreme Court — has helped India vaccinate more people, the pace of immunization has slipped since mid-September.

This means: The country could miss the target of inoculating all its adult population by year-end. Remember, a billion doses administered marks just over the halfway point, as India has to administer two doses to over 900 million adults. Vaccination of children will take more time.

When will all adults be fully vaccinated at current rate?

The government wants to vaccinate all adults by year-end. At the current rate — based on last month's average — India will manage to vaccinate nearly **76%** of its adult population by Dec 31.



Day after 100 cr vax milestone, PM Modi talks... ... masking

He said the 100 crore vaccinations answered all doubts about India's capacity to combat the coronavirus, but emphasised the need for continued caution ahead of the festive season and said wearing masks must be second nature. "It is like we are used to wearing footwear when we step out... we should also get used to wearing masks," he said.

"No matter how good the cover is, no matter how modern the armour is, even if the armour is a complete guarantee of protection, weapons are not thrown while the battle is on."

... 100 crore jabs

"The 100 crore vaccinations are not just a figure, but a reflection of the strength of the country, it is the creation of a new chapter of history. This is a picture of a new India that sets difficult goals and knows how to achieve them."



... about his call in 2020 for people to clang metal plates

"This was meant to be a sign of unity and resolve... India's entire vaccination programme is born in the womb of science, has grown on scientific grounds and has reached all four directions through scientific methods," he said, rebutting some experts, in India and abroad, who had argued that the pandemic cannot be countered by such demonstrative actions.

... vaccination equality

"Democracy means 'sabka saath'. Taking everyone along, the country started the campaign of 'free-vaccine, vaccine for everyone'. Poor-rich, village-city, faraway, the country has only one mantra that if the disease does not discriminate, then there cannot be any discrimination in the vaccine. So it was ensured that VIP culture does not dominate the vaccination campaign."

A billion: India Thursday marked a billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines administered since it began the immunization program on January 16.



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COVID-19 vaccine mandate:

Who's required to show proof of vaccination?



While waiting for the White House to review the rules on a federal vaccine mandate, some states and cities have taken vaccine requirements into their own hands. For instance, there's a new mandate that applies to all city workers in New York City and comes with a \$500 bonus for getting vaccinated. Los Angeles approved its strictest COVID-19 vaccination mandate earlier this month, which will require people age 12 and older to be fully vaccinated before entering public indoor places, starting Nov. 4. Also in California, a judge ordered vaccine mandates for prison guards and staff. California Gov. Gavin Newsom says all students, elementary through high school, will be required to get the shot once it's fully approved for those age groups -- which could happen as early as November.

So far, the mandates are working as more people are getting vaccinated. For example, meat processor Tyson Foods now has a 91% vaccination rate among its employees. New York teachers have reached a 96% vaccination rate. But there's also opposition from some groups: Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich requested a restraining order to block the federal vaccine mandate. Some students have reportedly withdrawn from college due to the mandates.

President Joe Biden is seeking to put pressure on about 80 million more Americans to get vaccinated. Roughly 1 in 500 people in the US have died from COVID-19, and vaccination rates have slowed despite the uptick in delta variant cases. Meanwhile, more than 98% of people hospitalized with a COVID-19 diagnosis between June and August this year were unvaccinated. We'll explain who will be required to get COVID-19 vaccines under the new administration plan. If you're already fully vaccinated and waiting to get a booster shot, the Food and Drug Administration has authorized

mixing boosters for those who are eligible. Also, here's the latest on retrieving your vaccination card if you lost it and vaccines for kids.

Everyone affected by the COVID-19 vaccine mandate Announcing "a new plan to require more Americans to be vaccinated to combat those blocking public health," Biden on Sept. 9 rolled out his administration's Path Out of the Pandemic program, which aims to increase the vaccination rate by requiring shots across public and private sectors. Roughly 80 million Americans who are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine have not been vaccinated. And as of July, 99% of COVID deaths were among the unvaccinated, who also made up 97% of hospitalizations.

Who's required to be vaccinated under the plan:

Employers with 100 or more employees will be required to have their employees either be fully vaccinated or get tested weekly to come to work. Biden said the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration would implement the requirements that will affect more than 80 million workers. Federal workers and employees of contractors that do business with the federal government will be required to be vaccinated.

The Department of Health and Human Services will require vaccinations in Head Start Programs, as well as schools run by the Department of Defense and the Bureau of Indian Education. Workers in health care facilities that receive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements, including hospitals and home health agencies, will also have to be fully vaccinated. Individuals applying to become lawful permanent US residents must be fully vaccinated, US Citizenship and Immigration Services announced on Sept. 14.

The strategy also calls on state officials to make vaccinations mandatory for teachers and school staff. And the president called on entertainment venues to require proof of vaccination or a negative test to enter their facilities.

The administration is also upping fines for those who fail to wear masks on airplanes, trains and buses.

Who opposes the mandate?

Since the White House announced federal COVID-19 vaccine mandates affecting roughly two-thirds of the US workforce, or up to 100 million people, it's received backlash from congressional Republicans, as

well as state and local officials. Republican governors have threatened to fight the administration's new policies. Washington Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, the senior Republican on the House of Representatives committee overseeing health policy, said Biden "is using fear, control and mandates." The Republican National Committee has vowed to sue the Biden administration over the vaccine mandate.

A report from the CDC on Sept. 17 shows that unvaccinated people were over 10 times more likely to become hospitalized or die from COVID-19, according to data from April through July: "Getting vaccinated protects against severe illness from COVID-19, including the delta variant."

Some companies that fall under the new vaccine mandate are facing challenges and questions about compliance and implementation of the policy, according to the Wall Street Journal. For example, businesses have to figure out who will be responsible for covering the cost of testing unvaccinated employees and whether they can authorize exemptions.

Companies with employee vaccination mandates

Several companies have announced plans for mandatory vaccinations, including airlines, cruise lines, concert halls, health care facilities and restaurants. Some of the requirements may include mask and testing guidelines, and some may only apply to employees traveling internationally, working in the office or having face-to-face interactions with customers. If any of these applies to you, check with your employer for more details.

Some of the companies that have announced vaccination requirements for employees:

Amtrak, AT&T, Google, IBM, Lyft, McDonald's, Microsoft, NBC Universal, Netflix, Salesforce, Southwest Airlines, Twitter, Tyson Foods, Uber, United Airlines, Walgreens, Walmart and more.

Vaccine mandates for the US military and police

In August, the Pentagon said that all 1.3 million active-duty service members will need to receive COVID-19 vaccinations. The directive covers all active-duty members of the Armed Forces or in the Ready Reserve, including the National Guard. The Department of Defense will make Pfizer shots accessible on military installations around the world. Service members who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines will still be considered fully vaccinated. There are some exemptions, including one for religious reasons, but they aren't granted frequently. In response to several cities requiring law enforcement officers to get vaccinated, police

associations have come out openly against vaccine mandates. In Oregon, for example, police and firefighter associations are suing to block a state-level vaccine requirement.

Right now, members of the military are already required to get at least nine other vaccines -- up to 17 total vaccines -- depending on where they're deployed.

Cities, states and universities already have vaccine mandates

Several states, including California and New York, require state employees to be vaccinated. Additionally, several cities, like New York City and San Francisco, require proof of vaccination for inside dining, gyms and other indoor activities. Los Angeles County requires proof of vaccination to enter indoor bars, nightclubs, breweries and wineries. This could eventually be extended to all public indoor places for everyone eligible to get the vaccine.

Nine states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have vaccination requirements for staff in K-12 schools. More than 400 colleges and universities are also requiring vaccines for students who plan to take in-person classes.

Other vaccines that are mandated in the US

A federal vaccine mandate is not new. In 1977, for example, the federal government began an initiative to vaccinate up to 90% of the nation's children against seven diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Rubella, Tetanus.

All 50 states require specific vaccines for students, with exemptions varying from state to state.

Most school requirements follow the CDC's vaccine schedule for children.

States that are banning COVID-19 vaccination requirements

At least 20 states with Republican governors, including Arkansas, Florida and Texas, prohibit proof-of-vaccination requirements. That means businesses; schools and local government institutions can't enforce a vaccine mandate. (The same goes for requiring face masks.) The prohibitions went into effect through either legislation or executive orders. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott earlier this month issued an executive order banning all state entities, including private employers, from enforcing vaccine mandates. Some governors are trying to prevent private employers, as well as the state, from requiring vaccines, according to the National Academy for State Health Policy. Some are also trying to prevent the use of vaccine passports, which show proof that you've been vaccinated against COVID-19.



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CORONA VIRUS: NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD:

****New Zealand's coronavirus outbreak spreads to South Island.***

New Zealand reported 104 new coronavirus infections on Saturday, including the first community case of the virus in the country's South Island in nearly a year, health officials said. Most of the new infections were reported in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city that has been under a strict lockdown for more than two months. Looser restrictions are in place in most of the rest of the country of 5mn.

The risks of a further spread from the case reported in Blenheim, in the north east of the South Island, remained low, health officials said, with the person likely in the late stage of infection.

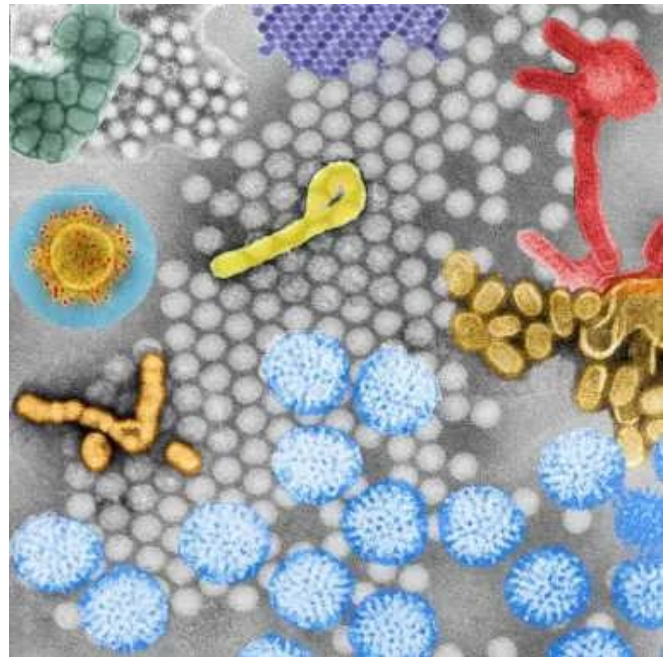
"So far, initial case interviews have identified a small number of close contacts, who have been contacted and are currently isolating with tests arranged," the health ministry said in a statement.

On Friday, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said that New Zealand will end its strict lockdown measures and restore more freedoms only when 90% of its eligible population is fully vaccinated. As of Saturday, 70% of those eligible were fully inoculated.

Once the poster child for stamping out COVID-19, New Zealand has been unable to beat an outbreak of the highly infectious Delta variant of COVID-19 centred in Auckland, forcing Ardern to abandon her elimination strategy and switch to living with the virus. The number of cases in the current outbreak reached 2,492 and New Zealand has recorded 28 coronavirus-related deaths so far in the pandemic.

****Pandemic may have eliminated one flu virus type completely.***

As Covid-19 spread to hundreds of millions of people around the world, another potentially lethal disease — influenza, hardly reared its head at all. And seasonal flu rates globally have been so low for the past 18 months, it looks as though one flu virus has been stamped out altogether. Two studies (read here and here) show one of four flu viruses that infect humans each year hasn't been detected anywhere in the world since April 2020.



So does that mean it's gone for good? It's still too early to say. There is a chance this particular virus — the Yamagata virus — might be lurking in a pocket of the world somewhere, according to Ian Barr, deputy director of the World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza at the Doherty Institute, and co-author of one of the studies. "It may re-emerge, but we haven't had a single detection of that virus in 18 months," he added.

The Yamagata virus belongs to the influenza B group of flu viruses. With very rare exceptions, this group only infects humans. (Something else that sets them apart from influenza, A viruses is that they mutate slowly.) Because they don't jump between humans and other animals, they won't cause a pandemic, unlike influenza A viruses, the one that causes swine flu.

When Covid-19 hit, social distancing, better hygiene and masks all contributed to driving flu levels down, and finished off the Yamagata virus faster than expected. But what had the biggest effect, Professor Barr said, were closed borders.

****. FDA scientists say Pfizer vaccine's efficacy in children outweighs risks***

Food and Drug Administration scientists said Friday that the likely benefits of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine

for 5- to 11-year-olds outweighed the risks, including rare cases of heart inflammation. If the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sign off on the kid-sized doses of the Pfizer vaccine, it will be the first COVID-19 vaccine available to people that young. Also on Friday, Pfizer and BioNTech said their vaccine was 90.7 percent effective against coronavirus in clinical trials of children from 5 to 11, who were given either two 10-microgram doses or a placebo. The doses were a third as large as those given to people 12 and up. Sixteen of the trial participants who received the placebo got COVID, compared to three who were vaccinated.

****Federal Judge in South Carolina Denies Restraining Order to Block Vaccine Mandates.***



A federal judge has denied a restraining order on Thursday that would have blocked vaccine mandates for up to 125 city employees in South Carolina.

Tom Fernandez and his firm Fernandez Law represented the plaintiffs, 100 of whom are first responders who filed a lawsuit against the cities of Charleston and North Charleston, Charleston County, and the St. Johns Fire District over the mandates.

"They felt that it was nothing short of government coercion to get the vaccine," Fernandez told The Epoch Times. "We filed a lawsuit in state court alleging their constitutional protections. They did not want the vaccine. They believed it was their religious right to refuse it. They believed it was their right to free speech, right to privacy, and their right to bodily autonomy to not get the vaccine."

Judge David Norton with the U.S. District Court in South Carolina said in a statement that it's not the court's role to impose employer policies that would

"best strike a balance of the competing interests of a pandemic that has plagued not just this state or country, but the world, for almost two years."

"His points he made in his order yesterday were basically regurgitated nightly news talking points," Fernandez said. "They had no facts. There was nothing substantiative. It was basically, 'COVID is an emergency and hospitals are full. There are no ventilators available, and that the ICUs have no more beds available.'"

Fernandez said they presented to the court data from local hospitals that showed that COVID-19 infections are on a decline across the state and the nation, with less than half of the ventilators being used, and of those, only 7 percent were being used by COVID-19 patients.

The judge chose those talking points over the constitutional protections of police officers and firefighters, Fernandez said.

Initially, city employees must be vaccinated by Nov. 5, but North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey extended it to Nov. 19 after the ruling.

"This is essential to provide a safe working environment for city employees and to deliver safe and efficient services to our citizens," Summey said. "The city is hopeful that some plaintiffs, having read Judge Norton's order, may now wish to comply with the vaccination policy in order to retain employment."

Many of the employees with whom Fernandez has spoken, he said, "are standing their ground."

"We have mayors who think it's only going to be a handful of police officers and firefighters who are going to be terminated," Fernandez said. "They are going to suddenly find on day one that they are short a large percentage of their department."

****Viral load in 2nd wave was higher than in 1st: Study***

A study in Mumbai has found a 100-fold increase in the amount of SARS-CoV-2 virus being expelled by Covid-19 patients during the second wave as compared to the first wave. The study, jointly done by the BMC and the Foundation of Medical Research, underlined that the Delta variant of the Covid-causing SARS-CoV-2 was highly infectious. "We studied 75 Covid patients, some of whom were vaccinated, and found

that compared to 2020 (the first wave), there was a two-fold increase in the proportion of people expelling virus in their breath and a 100-fold increase in the amount of virus per patient," says Dr Nerges Mistry of FMR. The authors found that only 42% of the patients during the first wave could expel the virus (on to a face mask) while the corresponding number during the second wave was 91%.

All the patients studied during the second wave were affected by the Delta variant. Samples were collected from patients within 36 hours of their diagnosis. Each participant was given a modified N95 mask that was attached with a gelatin membrane on the inner surface of the mask for 30 minutes.

The participants were asked to carry on with their activities for the first 20 minutes and then asked to do vocal tasks (such as reading, coughing) in the last 10 minutes. The gelatin film was removed and studied.

"We found the viral load among the patients was double of the load among first wave patients," said chest physician Dr Vikas Oswal, who was associated with the study. He said the second wave was less lethal in terms of deaths, but each patient had a high low-CT value and high viral load.

The researchers said the study underlined the need for masking in the foreseeable future.

**The death toll for healthcare workers*



The World Health Organization (WHO) informed that 80,000 to 180,000 healthcare workers may have been killed by Covid-19 up to May this year, insisting they must be prioritised for vaccination. WHO said the fact that millions of health workers remain unvaccinated is an "indictment" on the countries and companies controlling the global supply of doses.

A WHO paper estimated that out of the planet's 135 million health staff, "between 80,000 to 180,000 health and care workers could have died from Covid-19 in the period between January 2020 to May 2021".

"Data from 119 countries suggest that on average, two in five health and care workers globally are fully vaccinated. But of course, that average masks huge differences," pointed out WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

"In Africa, less than one in 10 health workers have been fully vaccinated. Meanwhile, in most high-income countries, more than 80% of health workers are fully vaccinated."

Annette Kennedy, president of the International Council of Nurses, warned: "They [healthcare workers] are now burnt out, they are devastated, they are physically and mentally exhausted. And there is a prediction that 10% of them will leave within a very short time."

Also: The WHO wants each country to have vaccinated 40% of its population by the end of the year, but Tedros said 82 countries are at risk of missing that target, chiefly through insufficient supply.

In high-income countries, as categorised by the World Bank, 133 doses have been administered per 100 people. In the 29 lowest-income nations, the figure drops to five.

*India on Friday reported 15,786 new cases and 231 fatalities, taking the cumulative caseload to 34,143,236 (175,745 active cases) and fatalities to 453,042.

*Worldwide: Over 243.27 million cases and over 4.94 million fatalities.

*Vaccination in India: 1,005,904,580 doses.
Worldwide: Over 6.76 billion doses.

COVID19: Weekly Update.

The numbers below are from
Saturday 10-23-2021 * 12pm US East coast Time...
Compiled Periodically By:

Kaushik Amin.

201-936-4927/Kaushikamin@hotmail.com

South Asian Media Network Inc., USA.

*There are likely false data & variations in data most of the time, so,
Please use the data wisely. Details are compiled from various sources.
Marked "*" are not reliable data.*

World:

243,909,285. Cases. / 4,956,391. Deaths.

Recovered till today:

221,004,981.

01. U.S. A.:

46,264,596. Cases. / 755,721. Deaths.

02. India** (???)

34,161,956. Cases. / 453,780. Deaths.

03. Brazil:

27,711,843. Cases. / 605,211 Deaths.

05. UK:

8,689,949. Cases. / 139,326. Deaths.

27. Canada.

1,695,914. Cases. / 28,729. Deaths.

00 (India): Gujarat* : (???)

826,378. (???) Cases. / 10,087. (???) Deaths.

USA States:

01. California:

4,755,586. Cases. / 71,525. Deaths

02. Texas*:

4,206,539. Cases. / 70,459. Deaths.

03. Florida:

3,681,830. Cases / 58,608. Deaths.

04. New York*:

2,607,661. Cases / 56,713. Deaths.

05. Illinois:

1,680,908. Cases. / 28,414. Deaths.

06. Georgia:

1,625,399. Cases. / 28,519. Deaths.

07: Pennsylvania:

1,530,309. Cases / 30,955. Deaths.

08. Ohio

1,515,838. Cases / 23,955. Deaths.

12. New Jersey*:

1,187,569. Cases. / 27,828. Deaths.

19. Massachusetts:

842,652. Cases. / 18,911. Deaths.

34. Connecticut:

400,226. Cases / 8,721. Deaths.



COVID19: DOS AND DON'TS.

***More than 4** Covid19 vaccines are available now nationwide in the US. Find out how to get yours.

**** The third booster dose (for Pfizer and Moderna, and also a second booster for Jhonsons') are available now.***

****More serious Delta and Delta Plus (Indian), Lambda, now Kappa, Mue and now a Japanies verients are around & can create an another pendamic, so be careful & follow religeously the Guidelines given by the Medical Authorities of your country.***

* Finally Vaccine is available all time in the US; India and many parts of world, many of us got both the doses, or single dose in case of Jhonson & Jhonson's vaccine. Yet post vaccination results/effects are not known to the research/medico community fully. We are still in a Pandemic Period, of Phase 2 and 3, also possible invasion of new 4 or more strains of UK, Brazil, South Africa, and now India Coronavirus.

* Entering the new wave of Delta and Delta Plus and three other virus varients, the number of cases are still on a higher side, yet to achive the flat curve, world over most of us are just ignoring the pandemic do's & don'ts, particularly when we are with festivity mode in Summer days of 2021, so please take Extreme Care, Stay Safe & Stay Home. Yet not an easy time for every one! * Corona is still around, & may remain lifelong! It's not as simple as viral flu. It's as dangerous as like a contest of survival of the fittest.

* Vaccine third does is available now, first to the frontline medico fraternity, patients in need, & nursing home/long term care facilities residents on a priority,

so be careful & protect yourself & your loved ones for good. Mask, frequent hand wash with soap & social distancing only is the option for now

*** Now Mask is not needed in most of the USA, if you are vaccinated. But it is advised one must use Mask, even if you have taken Covid shots, Vaccine is just protection, it's not a cure!** Also wear Gloves, Sunglasses & the most important: keep safe distance, keep washing your hands frequently with soap or use reliable sanitizer either one at least for 30 seconds.

**** In India nasal steam (Naas) is recommended by the Government authorities, Ayurvedic practitioners, & also is a traditional remedy, but the US CDC and other Western Health Authorities doesn't recommend it due to a probable risk to the brain.***

**** If you can, use Mouth Rinse, twice a day, will help to boost your oral health.***

**** If you have young kids/minors attending the school or college, it's advised to put on the mask for everyone inside the home.***

* We are passing through a tough time of Life & Death. Follow Social Distancing, but stay in for Social Contacts. If you know any one suffering with Corona, your nearer or dearer, call and talk to them frequently, we don't know whether they will return safely with us. Call other relatives/friends, at least ten persons a week. We are social & want to take care of those who are cut off due to Corona self-imposed lockdowns. Also keep busy yourself & family members with plenty of daily activities like yog, exercise & Stay Physically Fit, Pursue Your Hobby, Get Adequate, at least 6 to 8 hrs. of Sleep, & Eat Healthy Balance Diet.

**** Yet it's a long march to finish, no one knows when we will...!!!!!***

Take care, & Stay Safe.



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Dr. S. B. Desai

Former Head, Microbiology Dept.
V P Science College



Guest Speaker

Dr. Balvant Arora, MD

Plastic Surgeon
Hair Transplant Surgeon



: Chief Guest :

Mr. Bhikhubhai B. Patel

(CVM Chairman)

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