



The Louisiana Department of Health warns that COVID-19 cases among people who are not yet fully vaccinated are surging, and all people in Louisiana, especially those who are not yet vaccinated, are at an elevated risk of exposure to COVID-19 as the significantly more contagious Delta variant continues to spread. Delta is now the dominant strain of COVID in our country and region, making up most cases.

As of August 2, 2021, Louisiana now has the highest recent COVID case growth in the US. The White House has declared Louisiana a “State of Concern.” Louisiana is No. 1 in the country for per capita cases. The Delta variant is threatening the ability of Louisiana’s hospitals to deliver care as they become overwhelmed with patients. 83% of COVID cases are the Delta variant in our region.

WHAT WE KNOW:

- Universal masking has proven to be an effective strategy to reduce community spread of COVID-19
- Vaccination significantly reduces one's chance of becoming critically ill or dying from COVID-19

WHAT'S NEW:

- Delta variant is more than 2x as transmissible as the original strains of COVID-19
- Delta variant is causing large, rapid increases in infections that are compromising the capacity of healthcare systems to provide care to the communities they serve
- While vaccination reduces one's chance of becoming infected with COVID-19, those who do become infected with the Delta variant despite being fully vaccinated are at risk of transmitting it to others
- Vaccinated individuals who do become infected with the Delta variant have similar viral loads as unvaccinated individuals who become infected

HOW TO STAY SAFE DURING COVID PANDEMIC:

- If you can do an activity outdoors instead of indoors, do it outdoors
- Follow good hygiene practices (wash your hands vigorously & frequently, & don't touch your face)
- Stay away from crowded settings
- Work virtually if possible
- If you suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested immediately
- If you're in an at-risk group, be extra careful

Our vaccination rate of 43.3% is insufficient to slow the spread of the virus. The variant's emergence before we reached higher vaccination rates has put us in the perfect storm.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why is the Delta variant more dangerous than the others?

A: The Delta variant is the most transmissible variant yet. It's faster, fitter, and it's now the dominant COVID strain in the country and Louisiana. If you're unvaccinated, you are the most vulnerable to this dangerous strain. The overwhelming number of cases and hospitalizations are among unvaccinated individuals. According to the CDC, over 97 percent of people who are entering the hospital right now are unvaccinated. If you're vaccinated, you have very good (but not absolute) protection against severe outcomes - hospitalization and death.

Q: If I am vaccinated, do I need to worry about the Delta variant?

A: The COVID vaccines offer protection against the Delta variant, but vaccinated residents can still pass the virus to vulnerable groups and those who are unvaccinated. Vaccinated individuals represent a very small number of those hospitalized with COVID around the country.

Q: Where can I receive a vaccine?

A: The vaccine is available at over 1,400 providers across the state. These providers include national and independent pharmacies, public health providers, clinics and physician offices, hospitals and others. For vaccine information or to schedule an appointment with a local provider, call 855-453-0774.

PROTECTED FROM	VACCINATED	UNVACCINATED
Severe Symptoms	✓	✗
Hospitalization	✓	✗
Death	✓	✗