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COVID-19 Update: Hospitalization, Death About 10x More Likely Among Unvaccinated

One third of all Lake County COVID deaths (30 of 92) have occurred since July 1

Lake County, CA (September 24, 2021) – The surge of COVID-19 infections in Lake County has dropped from the peak of a month ago, but continues to be higher than we would like. Local hospitals are still seeing a steady flow of COVID-infected patients; they are not overwhelmed right now, but many Lake County residents remain vulnerable to severe disease.

Almost 1/4 of Lake County's total deaths related to COVID have come in the last 6 weeks, and 1/3 (30) have occurred since July 1. Each of these deaths is a true tragedy, and our thoughts are with the families and those otherwise connected.

Vaccination offers the best available protection. Unvaccinated folks are about 10 times more likely to become infected, get hospitalized, or die than those that are vaccinated. More people must get vaccinated to prevent problems during the next surge.

Vaccination is Available Near Your Community

Vaccines are readily available in Lake County; local pharmacies and many medical providers regularly vaccinate. The Health Services Department and our partners are also prioritizing bringing vaccination out into the community:

- Tuesday, 9/28, we will be vaccinating clients of Lucerne Senior Center.
- Friday, 10/1, a community vaccination event will be held in Clearlake from 11-5pm in the Mendo Mill parking lot (5255 Old Hwy 53, Clearlake, CA 95422). All are welcome, and you do not need to schedule an appointment in advance. Our deepest thanks to We Care (Lake County Community Collaborative), Lake County Tribal Health Consortium and the community partners helping to make this happen!
- In partnership with OPTUM, a Mobile Vaccination Van visits the communities of Nice, Clearlake, Lakeport, Lower Lake and Middletown each week - <http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Vaccines.htm>
- Public Health also now has some capacity to vaccinate homebound people at their residence. Call 707-263-8174.

Please encourage friends and family who are not yet vaccinated take one of these opportunities; it could be life-saving.

Quality Lake County-Focused COVID-19 and Vaccination Information

We continue to seek to provide quality COVID-related information on social media and other outlets. Our "Did You Know?" posts provide reliable responses to common vaccination questions. Visit the Facebook pages for the Health Services Department ([Public Health - Lake County](#)), [Latinos United of Lake County](#), [Hope Rising Lake County](#), [Kno'Qoti Native Wellness, Inc.](#), and [Hope Rising Lake County's Instagram page](#) for Lake County-focused information.

Vaccination FAQs and other information are also available at <http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Vaccines.htm>.

Recent and Upcoming Changes to Vaccine Availability

People who have significant immune compromise can now get a third shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Your medical provider can help determine if this is appropriate for you:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>

More changes to vaccine availability are expected soon:

- People 65+ will likely be able to get a third Pfizer dose within a week or so, pending final approval.
- Children aged 5-12 may be approved to receive a two-10 μ g injection course (*as opposed to the 30 μ g injections approved for people 12+*) as soon as this fall. Moderna studies for children are taking longer to complete.
- People who got the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) shot will soon likely be encouraged to get a second dose.

Studies have shown folks who received the Moderna vaccine have not demonstrated the decrease in immunity over time that has been seen with Pfizer. This is likely because the Moderna dose is much higher.

We all want to keep our schools and businesses open, and each dose of vaccine we administer is a step in the right direction. Remember, 92 Lake County residents have died due to COVID. The odds you will avoid severe complications are ten times greater if you are vaccinated. We will all be a lot better off this fall and winter if more of us are protected.

Gary Pace, MD, MPH

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