Q: Why do the numbers reported by CCHD not match those reported by NYS or the CDC?

A: The case numbers CCHD shares will be the most accurate picture of COVID in Clinton County. These include active cases that are in Clinton County during their infectious period. Sometimes this includes people whose permanent residence is outside of Clinton County – like college students who are living here while infectious. NYS and CDC may be including these people in their “home” county, rather than where they PHYSICALLY are while sick. This also means people who are not in Clinton County while sick – like those away at college in another state, may be incorrectly counted in Clinton County numbers by those entities.

Q: Who is required to isolate after receiving a positive COVID-19 diagnosis?

A: Anyone who receives a positive COVID-19 test is required to isolate for 10 days from their test or onset of symptoms – whichever happened first. Vaccinated individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to isolate just the same as unvaccinated individuals.

Q: Who is required to quarantine?

A:
- Unvaccinated individuals
  - People who are not fully vaccinated and are deemed a close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) of a confirmed positive case are required to quarantine for 10 days from their last exposure.
- Vaccinated individuals with symptoms
  - People who are fully vaccinated, are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are deemed a close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) of a confirmed positive case are required to quarantine for 10 days from their last exposure.
- Vaccinated individuals with no symptoms
  - People who are fully vaccinated and not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 are not subject to any quarantine orders after contact with a confirmed positive case.

Q: Who needs to be tested?

A:
- People who have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Most people who have had close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone with confirmed COVID-19.
  - Fully vaccinated people should be tested 3-5 days following a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.
  - People who are not fully vaccinated should quarantine and be tested immediately after being identified, and, if negative, tested again in 5–7 days after last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop during quarantine.

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- Unvaccinated people who have taken part in activities that put them at higher risk for COVID-19 because they cannot physically distance as needed to avoid exposure, such as travel, attending large social or mass gatherings, or being in crowded or poorly-ventilated indoor settings.
- People who are prioritized for community screening for COVID-19.
- People not fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine who have been asked or referred to get testing by their school, workplace, healthcare provider, state, tribal, local or territorial health department.

Q: **How do I get tested?**

A:
- Symptomatic individuals (those who have one or more symptom of COVID-19) should be under the care of a medical professional.
  - Individuals should contact their primary care provider to seek testing.
  - Individuals who do not have a primary care provider should contact a local Urgi-Care center or hospital.
- Asymptomatic individuals (those without symptoms) who are seeking testing due to an exposure to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider, local pharmacy, or Urgi-Care center for testing.
- Individuals who do not have health insurance and/or a primary care provider can contact CCHD for testing assistance at 518-565-4848.


For a list of current testing providers in Clinton County, visit [www.clintonhealth.org/covid19](http://www.clintonhealth.org/covid19).

Q: **Does being fully vaccinated prevent me from getting COVID-19?**

A: COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing COVID-19, including severe illness and death. Infections happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. When these infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be mild. If you are fully vaccinated and become infected with the Delta variant, you can spread the virus to others. People with weakened immune systems, including people who take immunosuppressive medications, may not be protected even if fully vaccinated. To learn more, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html).

Q: **If I already had COVID do I need to get vaccinated?**

A: Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. Research has not yet shown how long you are protected from getting COVID-19 again after you recover. Vaccination helps protect you even if you’ve already had COVID-19.

Evidence is emerging that people get better protection by being fully vaccinated compared with having had COVID-19. One study showed that unvaccinated people who already had COVID-19 are more than 2 times as likely than fully vaccinated people to get COVID-19 again.
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If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.


**Q: If I am fully vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask?**

**A:** To reduce the risk of being infected with the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission. To check the current level of transmission in Clinton County visit [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view).

You might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.

You will still need to follow guidance at your workplace and local businesses.

Due to the significant uptick in community spread, CCHD strongly recommends that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, return to mask wearing in indoor public places and crowded outdoor settings.

**Q: How do I get a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A:** People with moderately to severely compromised immune systems are especially vulnerable to COVID-19, and may not build the same level of immunity to 2-dose vaccine series compared to people who are not immunocompromised. This additional dose is intended to improve immunocompromised people’s response to their initial vaccine series.

Currently, CDC is recommending that moderately to severely immunocompromised people receive an additional dose. This includes people who have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response
- People should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them.

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If you feel you are eligible for a third dose, contact your primary care provider, local pharmacy, or CCHD at 518-565-4848. To learn more, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html.

Q: When can I get a COVID-19 booster shot?

A: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has developed a plan to begin offering booster shots this fall (subject to FDA conducting an independent evaluation and determination of the safety and effectiveness of a third dose of the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines and CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) issuing booster dose recommendations based on a thorough review of the evidence). These boosters may begin this fall, starting 8 months after an individual’s second dose.

At this time, CCHD is waiting for further guidance from New York State on the timeline and rollout procedures for booster shots. CCHD will communicate that information once that guidance has been provided.

To read the full statement from HHS, visit https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0818-covid-19-booster-shots.html.

Q: What percentage of our cases are “breakthrough” infections?

A: About 45% of cases in August were breakthrough cases. We are seeing proof that the vaccine is doing its job among those breakthrough cases. Only 5% of our August breakthroughs required hospitalization and there were no deaths among that group.

Q: What can I do to protect myself?

A:

- Wear a mask
  - CCHD strongly recommends that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, return to mask wearing in indoor public places and crowded outdoor settings.
- Avoid large gatherings
  - Many current cases can be connected to large gatherings like weddings and parties.
  - If you have attended a large gathering you should monitor for symptoms and mask up for 14 days after the event to protect those around you. If you hear of any positive (or rumored positive) cases that attended the same event you should seek testing, regardless of symptoms or vaccination status.
- Wash hands
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand-sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Stay home when sick
  - If you or a family member are sick, stay home and contact a healthcare provider.
- Get vaccinated
  - Getting vaccinated reduces your chances of contracting COVID-19, protects you from severe illness requiring hospitalization, and helps to eliminate the virus’ ability to mutate and create new variants.
Q: *Who decides which students are quarantined due to an exposure at school?*

A:

- Any students or staff who are closer than 6 feet, for longer than 15 minutes in a school setting are considered close contacts and required to quarantine.
  - After CCHD determines what day(s) the student was in school while infectious, the schools use seating charts to identify which students meet the definition of a close contact. If the school cannot provide a clear seating chart, the entire class or school bus will be quarantined.
- Students, faculty, and staff who are fully vaccinated AND are asymptomatic are not required to quarantine after an exposure.
- Students, faculty, and staff who have had tested positive for COVID-19 within 90 days of their exposure AND are asymptomatic are not required to quarantine after an exposure.

Q: *Why am I finding out about my student’s exposure so long after it happened?*

A:

- There can be many reasons that impact the time between exposure and notification.
  - Symptoms & Testing
    - Someone is contagious (and can spread COVID-19) two days before symptoms start or a test is done. If someone is symptomatic (or sick) but waits to be tested, it can delay the notification of results. **This is why it is important to seek testing promptly when symptoms develop.**
      - **Example 1:** Jane goes to school Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday Jane stays home with a cough and gets tested for COVID-19. If Jane is positive for COVID-19, her close school contacts from Wednesday and Thursday will need to quarantine for 10 days. In this example, notification will take place about 3-4 days after exposure.
      - **Example 2:** Chris has a runny nose on Wednesday but goes to school anyway. He goes to school Thursday and Friday, but leaves early with a fever. If Chris tests positive for COVID-19, his close school contacts from Monday-Friday will need to quarantine for 10 days. In this example, notification for students who had contact on Monday will take place about 5-6 days after exposure.
      - **Example 3:** Paul goes to school Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday Paul stays home with a headache. Paul doesn’t get tested until Monday. If Paul is positive for COVID-19, his close school contacts from Wednesday and Thursday will need to quarantine for 10 days. In this example, notification for students who had contact on Wednesday will take place about 7-8 days after exposure.
      - **Example 4:** Amy has a tummy ache on Wednesday but goes to school anyway. She goes to school Thursday and Friday, but leaves early after vomiting. Amy doesn’t get tested until Monday. If Amy tests positive for COVID-19, her close school contacts from the previous week will need to quarantine for 10 days. In this example, notification for students who had contact last Monday will take place about 8-10 days after exposure.
Testing Delays
- Sometimes the sample (or test swab) takes longer than expected to get tested at the lab. It is common for tests to take 24-48 hour to come back. However, some sites can take up to 4 days for results to come back.

Q: Someone in my home has symptoms of COVID-19, what should we do?

A:
1. Stay home
   - Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home as soon as they notice they are not feeling like themselves.
2. Get tested
   - Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 needs to seek testing promptly.
3. Isolate
   - As soon as a member of the household feels sick and seeks testing they should isolate away from the rest of the family members. This means, stay in a separate room, disinfect any surfaces they come in contact with (including the bathroom) every time they are touched. They should also be wearing a mask any time they are in common areas.
   - Remember, anyone who is closer than 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes is considered a close contact – isolating the family member who is ill as soon as they show symptoms will protect everyone else from re-exposure. A close contact’s quarantine period is based on the LAST time they had close contact; don’t wait for a positive result to separate. Be proactive.
4. Quarantine
   - Close household contacts will be required to quarantine for 10 days since the last exposure with the positive case. All family members should closely monitor themselves for symptoms and seek testing if they develop symptoms.
   - Fully vaccinated contacts who have NO symptoms are not issued quarantine orders, however they still need to avoid continued contact with the positive case. They should monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If they develop symptoms (even minor ones) they should stay home and seek testing.