



COVID-19

— COVID DATA TRACKER WEEKLY REVIEW

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Interpretive Summary for **December 16, 2022**

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'Tis the Season for Good Health

In the midst of the holiday season, U.S. COVID-19 [cases](#), [hospitalizations](#), and [deaths](#) have increased in recent weeks. More than 44% of U.S. counties are experiencing medium to high [COVID-19 Community Levels](#). At the same time, this [cold](#) and [flu](#) season has been a severe one. The trio of COVID-19, flu and [respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\)](#) is continuing to stress the healthcare system, resulting in decreased hospital capacity and staffing shortages.

[Vaccination](#) remains the best way to stay protected against severe infection from COVID-19 and flu, protect loved ones, and keep our communities safe. But [uptake](#) of the COVID-19 updated (bivalent) booster has been low—150 million people ages 5 years and older are eligible for the updated booster but have not yet gotten it. Among adults ages 65 years and older, who are at highest risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19, 28 million people are eligible but have not yet gotten an updated booster. Two new CDC studies^{1,2} show that these vaccines can **significantly reduce people's risk of getting hospitalized** for COVID-19. With rising COVID-19 rates, now is the time to get your booster if you haven't already.

CDC recommends that everyone who is [eligible](#) get an updated (bivalent) COVID-19 booster. They're safe, effective, and provide extra protection even if you've already gotten two or more doses of the original vaccine. It's never too late. [Find a vaccine](#).

People can also protect themselves and others by wearing a [mask or respirator](#) in indoor public settings, improving [ventilation](#) when indoors, and using [other layered prevention measures](#). If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get [tested](#). If you test positive, talk to your healthcare provider about [treatment options](#). [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) can help you make an informed decision about how best to protect yourself and others based on the latest information. Stay safe this holiday season.



Note to Readers: CDC will not publish COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review on December 23, 2022, or December 30, 2022. Publication will resume on January 6, 2023. To find the latest COVID-19 data, visit CDC's [COVID Data Tracker](#).

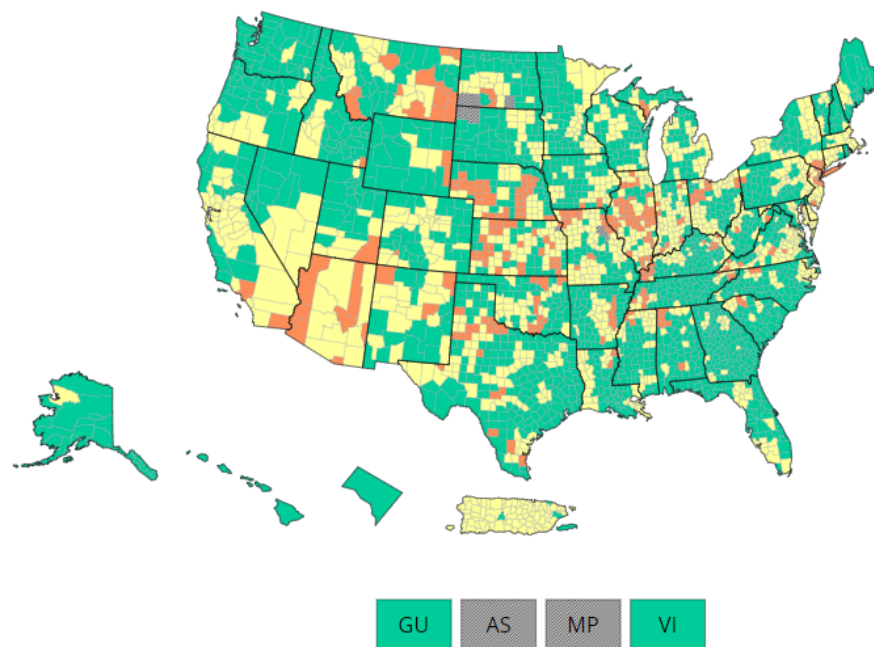
What's New

1. [Early Estimates of Bivalent mRNA Vaccine Effectiveness in Preventing COVID-19-Associated Emergency Department or Urgent Care Encounters and Hospitalizations among Immunocompetent Adults — VISION Network, 9 States, September–November 2022](#)
2. [Early Estimates of Bivalent mRNA Vaccine Effectiveness in Preventing COVID-19-Associated Hospitalization Among Immunocompetent Adults Aged \$\geq 65\$ Years — IVY Network, 18 States, September 8–November 30, 2022](#)

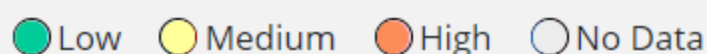
U.S. COVID-19 Community Levels by County

COVID-19 Community Levels*

As of December 15, 2022, there are 295 (9.2%) counties, districts, or territories with a high COVID-19 Community Level, 1,124 (34.9%) counties with a medium Community Level, and 1,789 (55.6%) counties with a low Community Level. Compared with last week, there were no changes in the proportion of low, medium or high level counties. Overall, 50 out of 52 jurisdictions** had high- or medium-level counties this week. The District of Columbia and Hawaii are the only jurisdictions to have all counties at low Community Levels.



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[COVID-19 Community Levels](#)

To check your COVID-19 Community Level, visit [COVID Data Tracker](#). To learn which prevention measures are recommended based on your COVID-19 Community Level, visit [COVID-19 Community Level and COVID-19 Prevention](#).

*CDC recommends use of [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) to determine the impact of COVID-19 on communities and to take [action](#). CDC also provides [Community Transmission Levels](#) to describe the amount of COVID-19 spread within each county. Healthcare facilities use Community Transmission Levels to determine [infection control](#) interventions.

**Includes the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Reported Cases

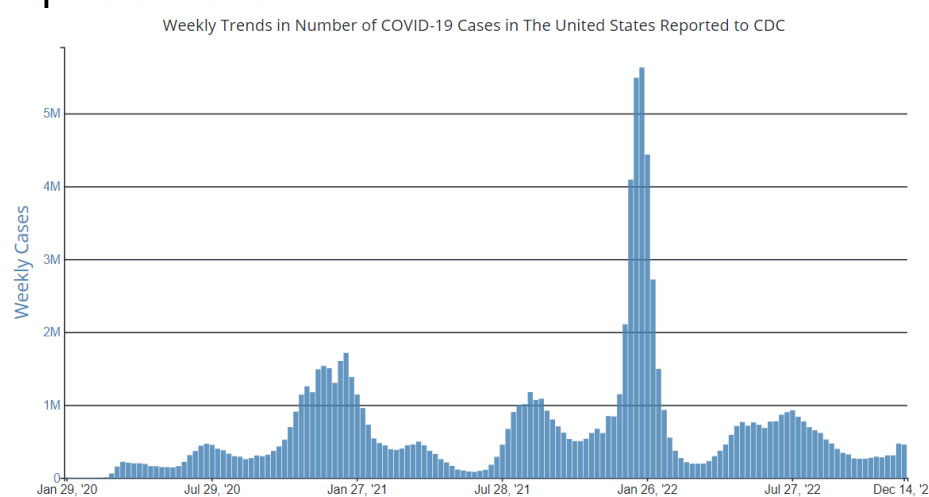
As of December 14, 2022, the current 7-day average of weekly new cases (65,067) decreased 2.9% compared with the previous 7-day average (67,034). A total of 99,705,095 COVID-19 cases have been reported in the United States as of December 14, 2022.

Variant Proportions

CDC [Nowcast projections](#)* for the week ending December 17, 2022, estimate the proportion of lineages designated as Omicron with estimates above 1%: BA.5—and five of its sublineages (BQ.1, BQ.1.1, BF.7, BN.1, and BA.5.2.6)—BA.4.6, and XBB. XBB is a recombinant of two BA.2 sublineages.

The primary Omicron lineages this week are BQ.1.1, projected to be 38.4% (95% PI 35.7-41.3%), BQ.1, projected to be 30.7% (95% PI 28.7-32.8%), XBB, projected to be 7.2% (95% PI 4.2-11.9%), and BN.1, projected to be 4.1% (95% PI 3.5-4.7%) nationally. This week, BQ.1.1 and XBB are increasing in proportion. All other lineages (BQ.1, BA.5, BF.7, BN.1, BA.5.2.6, and BA.4.6) are decreasing in proportion this week compared to last.

Weekly Trends in COVID-19 Cases in the United States Reported to CDC



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[More Case Data](#)

See [COVID Data Tracker](#) for the proportions of all relevant lineages currently circulating.

99,705,095	65,067
Total Cases Reported	Current 7-Day Average**
67,034	-2.9%
Previous 7-Day Average	Change in 7-Day Average since Previous Period

*CDC uses Nowcast projections to predict current variant proportions circulating in the United States. The median time from specimen collection to sequence data reporting is about 3 weeks. As a result, weighted estimates for the most recent few weeks may be unstable or unavailable. View Nowcast estimates on CDC's COVID Data Tracker website on the [Variant Proportions](#) page.

**Historical cases are excluded from weekly new cases and 7-day average calculations until they are incorporated into the dataset for the applicable date. No historical cases reported at this time.

Vaccinations

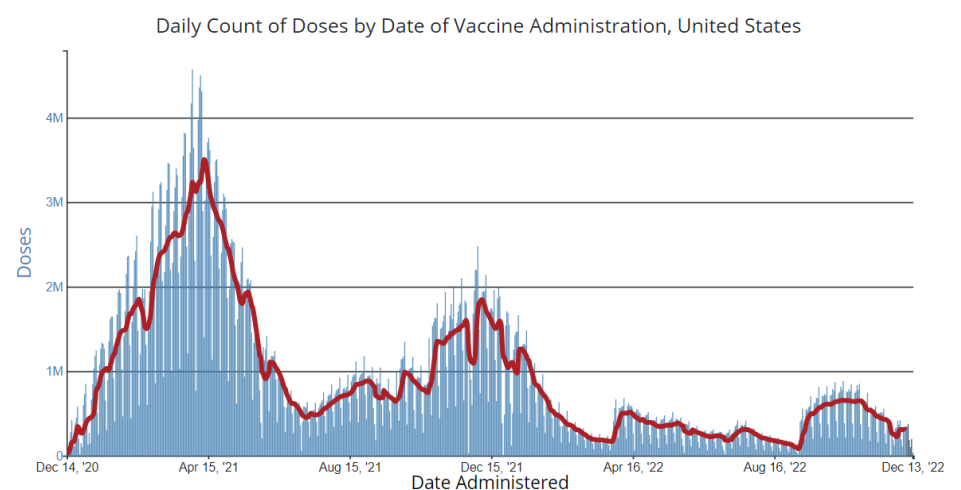
As of December 14, 2022, 660.4 million vaccine doses have been administered in the United States. Overall, about 228.8 million people, or 68.9% of the total U.S. population, have completed a primary series.* More than 44.2 million people, or 14.1% of the U.S. population ages 5 years and older, have received an updated (bivalent) booster dose.

660,400,812	44,356,082
Vaccine Doses Administered	Updated (Bivalent) Booster Doses Administered
228,831,995	44,154,294
People who have completed a primary series* (68.9% of the U.S. population)	People who have received an updated (bivalent) booster (14.1% of the U.S. population)
+0.0	+0.6%
Percentage point change from last week	Percentage point change from last week

*Represents the number of people who have received the second dose in a two-dose [COVID-19 vaccine series](#) (such as the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or Novavax vaccines) or one dose of the single-shot Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

Daily Change in the Total Number of Administered COVID-19 Vaccine Doses Reported to CDC by the Date of Administration, United States

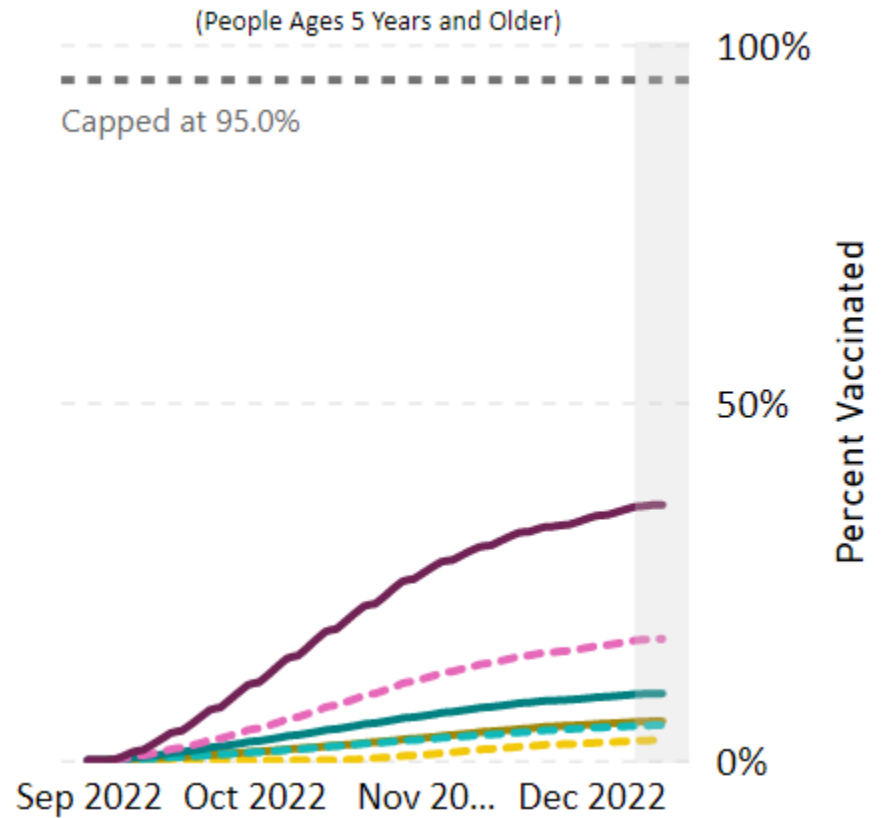
■ 7-Day moving average



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COVID-19 Updated (Bivalent) Booster Dose Administration, United States

Updated (Bivalent) Booster Dose



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5-11 yrs 12-17 yrs 18-24 yrs 25-49 yrs 50-64 yrs +65 yrs

[More Vaccination Data](#)

Hospitalizations

New Hospital Admissions

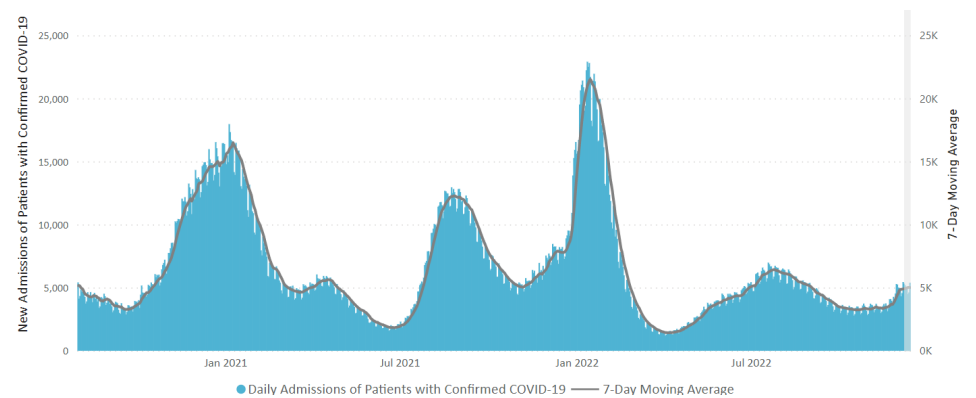
The current 7-day daily average for December 7–13, 2022, was 5,010. This is a 2.3% increase from the prior 7-day average (4,899) from November 30–December 6, 2022.

5,641,541	5,010
Total New Admissions	Current 7-Day Average

4,899	+2.3%
Prior 7-Day Average	Change in 7-Day Average

The start of consistent reporting of hospital admissions data was August 1, 2020.

Daily Trends in Number of New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions in the United States



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New admissions are pulled from a 10 am EDT snapshot of the HHS Unified Hospital Data – Analytic Dataset. Due to potential reporting delays, data from the most recent 7 days, as noted in the figure above with the grey bar, should be interpreted with caution. Small shifts in historic data may also occur due to changes in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Provider of Services file, which is used to identify the cohort of included hospitals.

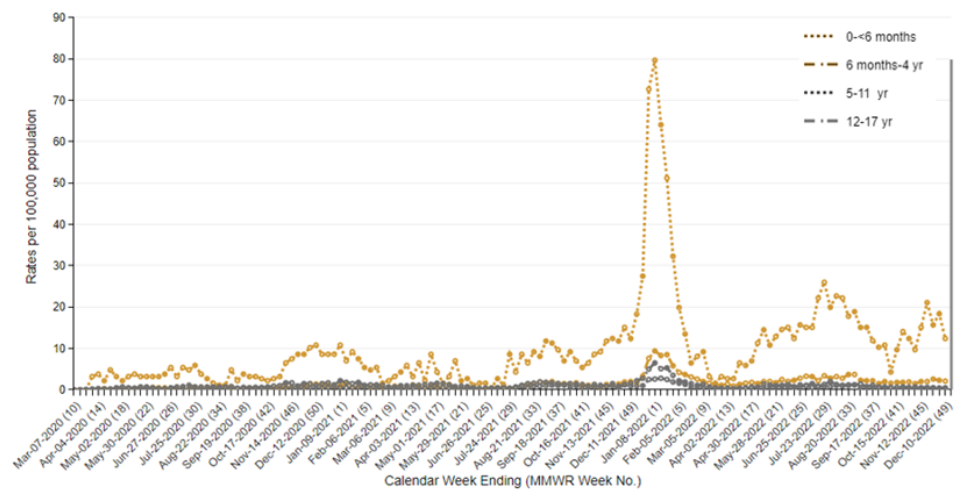
[More Hospital Data](#)

COVID-NET: Recent Trends in Hospitalization Rates among Adults and Children (All Ages)

CDC's [Coronavirus Disease 2019-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network \(COVID-NET\)](#) shows that pediatric rates of COVID-19-associated

Weekly Rates of COVID-19-Associated Hospitalizations among Children 0–17 Years

hospitalizations remain highest among young children younger than age 6 months. For the week ending November 26, 2022, hospitalization rates for this age group are 15.7 per 100,000 population, compared with 2.6, 0.5, and 0.5 per 100,000 population for children ages 6 months–4 years, 5–11 years and 12–17 years, respectively.



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The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network (COVID-NET) is an additional source for hospitalization data collected through a network of more than 250 acute-care hospitals in 14 states (representing ~10% of the U.S. population). Detailed data on patient demographics, including race/ethnicity, underlying medical conditions, medical interventions, and clinical outcomes, are collected using a standardized case reporting form.

[More COVID-NET Data](#)

Deaths

The current 7-day average of new deaths (386) decreased 13.2% compared with the previous 7-day average (445). As of December 14, 2022, a total of 1,083,279 COVID-19 deaths have been reported in the United States.

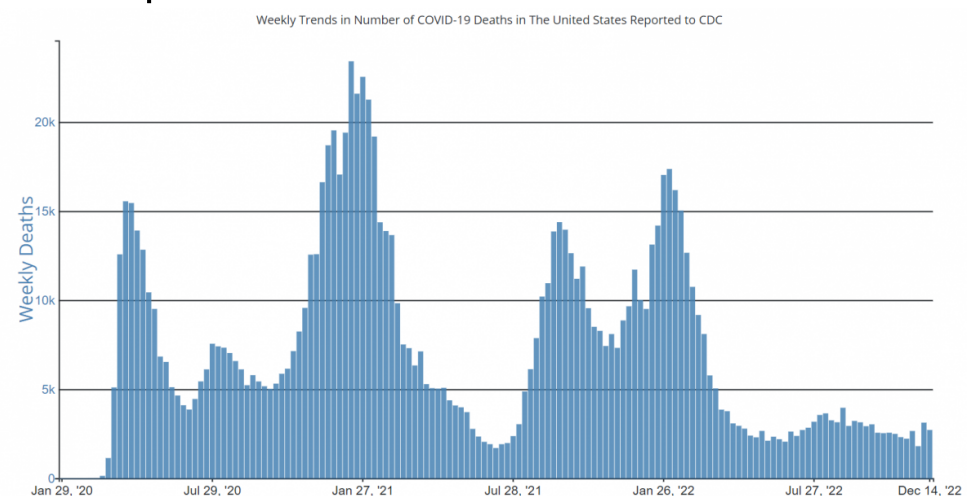
1,083,279 Total Deaths Reported	386 Current 7-Day Average*
445 Prior 7-Day Average	-13.2% Change in 7-Day Average Since Prior Period

*Historical deaths are excluded from the weekly new deaths and 7-day average calculations until they are incorporated into the dataset by their applicable date. Of 3,479 historical deaths reported retroactively, none were reported in the current week and none were reported in the prior week.

Testing

The percentage of COVID-19 NAATs (nucleic acid amplification tests)* that are positive is increasing in comparison to the previous week. The 7-day average of percent positivity from NAATs is now 12.2%. The 7-day average number of tests reported for December 2–8, 2022, was 371,659, down 7.9% from 403,657 for the prior 7 days.

Weekly Trends in Number of COVID-19 Deaths in the United States Reported to CDC



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[More Death Data](#)

COVID-19 NAAT Laboratory Test 7-day Percent Positivity by State/Territory

993,911,401
Total Tests Reported

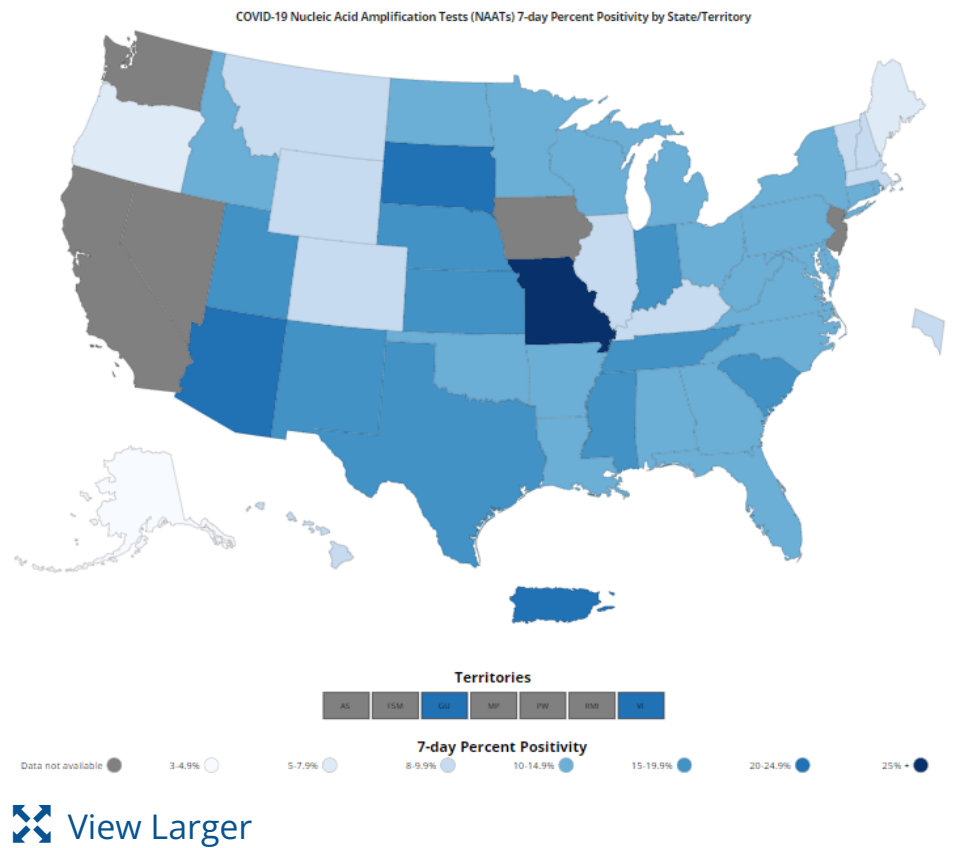
371,659
7-Day Average Tests Reported

12.2%
7-Day Average % Positivity

11.8%
Previous 7-Day Average % Positivity

+0.38
Percentage point change in 7-Day Average % Positivity since Prior Week

*Test for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19



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[More Testing Data](#)

Wastewater Surveillance

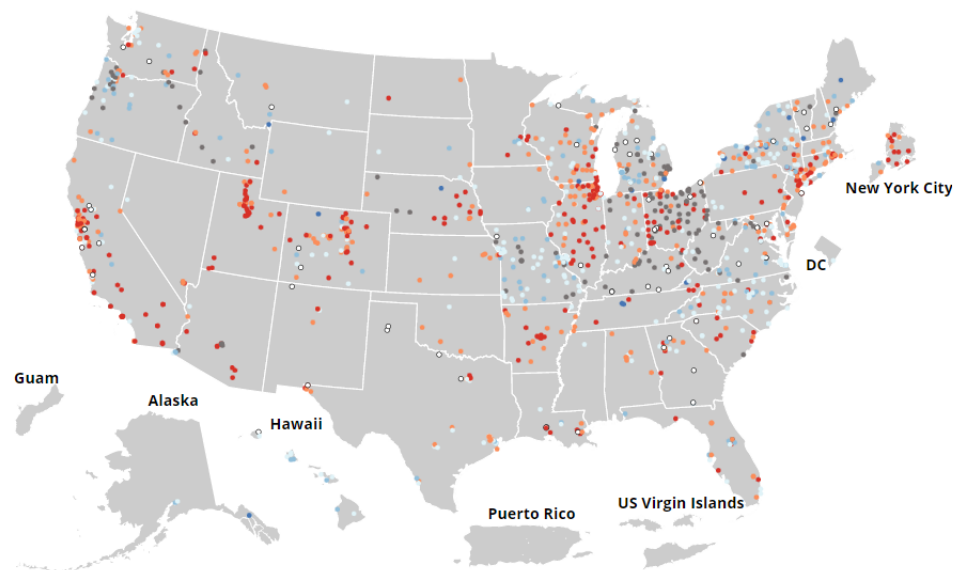
COVID Data Tracker's [Wastewater Surveillance](#) tab tracks levels, changes, and detections of SARS-CoV-2* viral RNA in wastewater at over 1,200 testing sites across the country.

Currently, about 80% of sites across the country are reporting moderate to high SARS-CoV-2 levels in wastewater. About 53% of sites reporting wastewater data are currently seeing some of the highest levels for those sites since December 1, 2021. About 43% of sites are experiencing a decrease in SARS-CoV-2 levels, and about 46% are reporting an increase.

For more information on how to use wastewater data, visit [CDC's wastewater surveillance website](#).

*The virus that causes COVID-19

SARS-CoV-2 Levels in Wastewater by Site



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0% denotes that levels are the lowest they have been at the site; 100% denotes that levels are the highest they have been at the site.

[More Wastewater Data](#)

Last Updated Dec. 16, 2022