



Town of New Castle, NH  
Settled 1623  
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## COVID Update August 9, 2021

**1. Covid is still going the wrong way-** and now it has in NH as well. **Rockingham County now has “substantial” transmission-** 116.8 cases per 100,000 people in the last 14 days. 9 counties have “substantial” transmission and only one, Sullivan County, has “moderate” transmission. In fact, there are no “low transmission” counties in New England currently.

**To stop the spread of the delta variant, the CDC is now recommending everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks indoors wherever COVID transmission is substantial or high.**

**Since transmission in Rockingham county is substantial, I am strongly recommending that individuals wear masks inside any town owned buildings and businesses, regardless of vaccination status. This includes town hall, the library, etc.**

**If you are part of a club or society in New Castle, please have your meetings outside if possible.**

The Delta variant continues to be about 2 times more infectious than the original virus and is over 90% of cases in the US. Breakthrough infections in fully immunized individuals do happen. **Vaccines help to prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and death.** They do not prevent transmission of the virus.

**2. Updated COVID vaccinated numbers in New Castle:** 67.6% of all New Castle residents are fully vaccinated (653 individuals of our of 966 residents). Last reported percentage was of adults, this is of all residents.

80% of all individuals in New Castle have had at least 1 dose of vaccine (776/966)- please, please get your second dose if you have not yet already.

The numbers for Portsmouth are 58.1% of all residents fully vaccinated and 67.5% with at least one dose.

Durham-28.2% fully vaccinated, and 32.2% with at least one dose.

**3. FDA approval soon-** The FDA aims to grant final approval (instead of Emergency use authorization or EUA) to the Pzifer vaccine by early next month.

#### **4. From The NY Times on 8/6/21- Boosting boosters**

The F.D.A. is accelerating efforts to authorize extra doses of the coronavirus vaccines for immunocompromised Americans. Experts say it's a safer alternative than patients seeking shots on their own, as many now do.

It's not just immunocompromised people who would benefit: According to recent research, coronavirus infections in patients with weaker immune systems may end up giving rise to more transmissible or virulent variants.

To allow immunocompromised individuals to get extra shots, the F.D.A. may modify the emergency authorizations of at least two of the vaccines, if data from the C.D.C. supports such a move, according to two people with knowledge of the discussions.

The regulatory modification is expected this month, and it could also be a first step toward booster shots for other potentially vulnerable Americans — a more controversial strategy that the Biden administration is now considering, [despite an outcry from the World Health Organization](#).

Separately, data from a clinical trial in South Africa suggested that a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was highly effective in preventing severe illness and death from the Delta and Beta variants of the virus — even without [booster shots](#).

Researchers evaluated one dose of the vaccine in nearly 500,000 health care workers who are at high risk of Covid-19. It had an efficacy of up to 95 percent against death from the Delta variant, and up to 71 percent against hospitalization, the researchers reported.

**4. One spot of good news, Canada:** Canada reopens its border to the US on Monday for people who are fully vaccinated.

#### **5. Another variant is here in the US: Lambda**

So far the variant is not nearly as worrisome as the Delta variant in the US, which has been driving a rise in cases nationwide, but early studies suggest that it has mutations that make it more transmissible than the original strain of the coronavirus.

"Lambda has mutations that are concerning but this variant remains quite rare in the US despite being around for several months," Dr. Preeti Malani, chief health officer in the division of infectious diseases at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, wrote in an email on Friday.

"It's difficult to know for certain how transmissible Lambda is and how well vaccines work. So far, it seems that Lambda is more transmissible than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus," which is similar to Delta and other variants, wrote Malani, an expert with the Infectious Diseases Society of America. SARS-CoV-2 is the name of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19.

"Thankfully studies suggest that the currently available vaccines remain protective. We have learned during the pandemic that things can change quickly, so controlling spread of COVID-19 in general will help manage Lambda," Malani wrote. "As long as there is uncontrolled spread of SARS-CoV-2, we will see more variants in the future. The only way out is widespread vaccination to control spread and prevent further mutation of SARS-CoV-2. It's a race between



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getting enough of the world vaccinated and the development of new variants that are less responsive to counter measures."

Yours in Health,

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