



Town of New Castle, NH  
Settled 1623  
Incorporated 1693

## **Public Health and COVID Update April 23, 2021**

Fortunately my email to the town did not send last night (end user error).

**WMUR has on its website that there were 17 new cases on New Castle in the last day. We have had 35 total prior to this since the pandemic started. At this point it is not clear if this represents a true number or a typo. Suffice it to say that many of those of us in town positions have been using our resources to find out the answer to this important question and it is not as easy to answer as I would like. In short, due to timing of data dumps, we will not know the answer until likely Saturday.**

**Regardless of the answer to this, please ALWAYS continue your community mitigation practices of mask wearing, social distancing, frequent handwashing, avoiding crowds and large indoor gatherings. Though many of you have stated that if this is a true local outbreak you will change your practices, please continue your conservative practices so that none of us have any regrets and we hopefully avoid the possibility of a large outbreak.**

I've tried only partially successfully to include a graphic this week.

1) Look for updated information from the CDC late Friday April 23 for the Johnson and Johnson/Janssen vaccine.

2) Below is the consensus statement from the CDC, NH Public Health Department, and NH Medical Society regarding mask wearing:

### **NH Medical Society Statement on Continued Mask Wearing during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The New Hampshire medical community urges individuals, communities, schools and businesses to continue to follow Centers for Disease Control and NH Division of Public Health Services

guidelines that highlight the efficacy of wearing masks in slowing the community transmission of COVID-19 in New Hampshire, in conjunction with other prevention measures, until:

- 1) COVID-19 vaccination levels reach a community-wide immunity of at least 70%; AND**
- 2) Community spread of COVID-19 continues at a "minimal" community transmission level as displayed by county on the NH COVID-19 data dashboards – less than 50 new infections per 100,000 population over prior 14 days, along with 7-Day PCR test positivity levels below 5%.**

These objective goals for vaccinations and community spread are intended to allow communities and businesses to make more informed, science-based decisions on masking and other policies to bring the pandemic to a close. However, there may be situations where individuals should continue to wear masks (such as large gatherings) and businesses should continue to require face masks.

In addition to getting the COVID-19 vaccine and continued wearing masks in public areas, these prevention measures also include avoiding large crowds, staying 6 feet apart from anyone outside your household who is not vaccinated, and practicing frequent hand washing.

**3) Current levels in our community as of April 22:**

25.7% of total population vaccinated in Rockingham County per CDC

515 new cases in NH on 4/22

406.8 cases/ 100,000 in last 14 days

% positivity in NH 4.3% in last 7 days (different on CDC vs NH DHHS site)

% positivity 5.31 % in Rockingham county in last 7 days



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VZW Wi-Fi

4:20 PM

69%

Instagram



3



cdcgov



## If you've been fully vaccinated

- Fully Vaccinated
- Unvaccinated and low risk
- Unvaccinated and high risk
- Single Household

### Prevention Measures

- Wear a mask
- Keep 6 feet away from others and avoid crowds
- Choose well ventilated areas
- Wash your hands

+ = No prevention measures needed

+ = No prevention measures needed

+ = Take prevention measures

+ + = Take prevention measures



CS-323361

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)



12,370 likes

[l.org](https://l.org)

4) For the scientists on New Castle, from Brief 19:

**a) Pregnancy and covid-19. More data show them to be a risky combination.**

Many would-be parents have been hesitant to start family planning in the covid-19 era, and according to a new study published in [JAMA Pediatrics](#); this may be for good reason. It turns out that some anxiety around childbearing with covid-19 is well-founded: women infected with SARS-CoV-2 during pregnancy were found to be 22 times more likely to die than otherwise healthy pregnant women.

The authors of the new study compared pregnant women with and without covid-19 between March and October 2020 in 18 different countries, including the United States. Over 2,000 women were included in the study, of whom approximately one-third of whom were covid-19 positive.

It is increasingly understood that pregnancy carries a higher degree of risk in some parts of the world due to altered physiology during pregnancy, including suppressed immune systems. These changes leave women more vulnerable to a variety of infections, altered inflammatory reactions, and a host of other conditions. In addition to the increased mortality risk, the authors of this new report discovered that covid-19-positive pregnant women were more likely to suffer from other complications of pregnancy, including preeclampsia and eclampsia--a condition characterized by high blood pressures which can be a harbinger of seizures, and which can require intensive care and longer hospital stays. These conditions also impart a higher risk of preterm birth. These complications were much more likely to affect mothers who were actively symptomatic with covid-19.

It is clear that covid-19 is not benign for pregnant women. In light of these new data, when comparing the risks of getting a covid-19 vaccine while pregnant, and getting covid-19 itself, the vaccine has emerged as the safer option by a substantial margin. The vaccines are well-tolerated by pregnant persons and help fend off cases of covid-19 that would otherwise introduce profound medical suffering, disability, and even death. Furthermore, despite rumors on the internet, there is no evidence that vaccines have any effect on fertility. As more data emerge, the more we are finding that vaccination is proving to be safe for pregnant persons--and certainly far safer than SARS-CoV-2 infection.

—*Joanna Parga-Belinkie, MD*

**b) Preliminary evidence points to safety of covid-19 vaccines in pregnancy.**

While the clinical trials for all of the covid-19 vaccines currently available in the United States excluded certain patient populations, including children and pregnant women, most specialty societies have favored pregnant women getting vaccinated. Until now, there was no to minimal clinical data for pregnant women to rely on when making a choice about whether or not to vaccinate. Fortunately, enough pregnant women have now been vaccinated and have reported their vaccination history to a database maintained by the US Centers for Disease Control and Preventino, called the [V-safe Registry](#). So far the results are highly reassuring.



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Published Wednesday in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), a new paper analyzed the data from the V-safe registry to assess whether there was a difference in side effects between pregnant and non-pregnant people. Of approximately 35,000 women, this study shows that any differences in local or systemic side effects were not statistically significant. Furthermore, nearly 4,000 pregnancies had detailed records obtained from patients and obstetric providers, 827 of which were completed. Of those completed pregnancies, over 86 percent resulted in live births, while 12.6 percent were miscarriages. This is roughly equal to the expected rate of miscarriage, meaning that coronavirus vaccination during pregnancy did not change the expected rate of miscarriage for pregnant women. The same results hold true for the expected rate of congenital anomalies, stillbirths, and infants with poor growth early in life. While data will continue to be collected, this preliminary evidence suggests that women should feel confident about getting vaccinated during pregnancy.

—Lauren Westafer, DO

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