



## Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for March 20, 2021

### COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker: How Many People Have Been Vaccinated In The U.S.?

(NPR) Vaccinating a high percentage of the population against COVID-19 is a crucial part of the U.S. strategy to curb the pandemic. Since COVID-19 vaccine distribution began in the United States on Dec. 14, more than 118 million doses have been administered, fully vaccinating over 41 million people or 12.6% of the total U.S. population.

Explore how the vaccine rollout is going in five graphics in the story, [built using data from](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

See more: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/01/28/960901166/how-is-the-covid-19-vaccination-campaign-going-in-your-state>

### KY COVID-19 Update

(From KDPH Daily Report) There 644 new cases recorded for Saturday, with 138 in youth 18 and under. Positivity rate is 3.07%. 25 new deaths were logged.

### The U.S. Shares Some of AstraZeneca Vaccine Stockpile It Currently Can't Use

(Reuters) - The United States plans to send roughly 4 million doses of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine that it is not using to Mexico and Canada in loan deals with the two countries, yielding to requests to share vaccines with allies. Mexico will receive 2.5 million doses of the vaccine and Canada is to receive 1.5 million doses, White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-mexico/u-s-to-share-4-million-doses-of-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-with-mexico-canada-idUSKBN2BA22S>

### Denmark reports two cases of serious illness, including one death, after AstraZeneca shot

(Reuters) - Denmark said on Saturday that one person had died and another fell seriously ill with blood clots and cerebral hemorrhage after receiving the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccination.

The two, both hospital staff members, had both received the AstraZeneca vaccine less than 14 days before getting ill, the authority that runs public hospitals in Copenhagen said.

The Danish Medicines Agency confirmed it had received two "serious reports", without giving further details. There were no details of when the hospital staff got ill.

Denmark, which halted using the AstraZeneca vaccine on March 11, was among more than a dozen countries that temporarily paused use of the vaccine after a small number of reports of cases of rare brain blood clots sent scientists and governments scrambling to determine any link.

Read more: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-denmark/denmark-reports-two-cases-of-serious-illness-including-one-death-after-astrazeneca-shot-idUSKBN2BC0A4>

### A more contagious coronavirus variant is spreading across the US. Can vaccines stop it?

(CNN) A new, more contagious and potentially more deadly variant of the coronavirus is spreading across the US, and health officials are worried. The B.1.1.7 variant, first spotted in the UK, is not only more easily transmitted, but it also appears to be [more deadly](#). Dr. Anthony Fauci warned about it Friday in a White House coronavirus update.

It was first spotted in Colorado at the end of December, said Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical adviser to President Biden.

"Since then it has been detected in 50 jurisdictions in the United States, and likely accounts now for about 20 to 30% of the infections in this country. And that number is growing," Fauci said.

"Of concern is that there are about 50% increase in transmission with this particular variant that has been documented in the UK and there's likely an increase in severity of disease if infected with this variant," he said.

Fauci pointed to [one study showing a 64% increased risk of death](#) for people infected with B.1.1.7 compared to those infected with the older, so-called wild-type variant. He showed a second study that indicated [a 61% higher risk of death](#) with B.1.1.7. But vaccines appear to protect well against B.1.1.7 and treatments such as monoclonal antibodies also appear to work against this particular variant, Fauci said. That makes it more important than ever to get people vaccinated quickly, he said.

Full story: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/20/health/variant-b117-vaccines-work/index.html>

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**Covid Cases Plummet 83% Among Nursing Home Staffers Despite Vaccine Hesitancy**

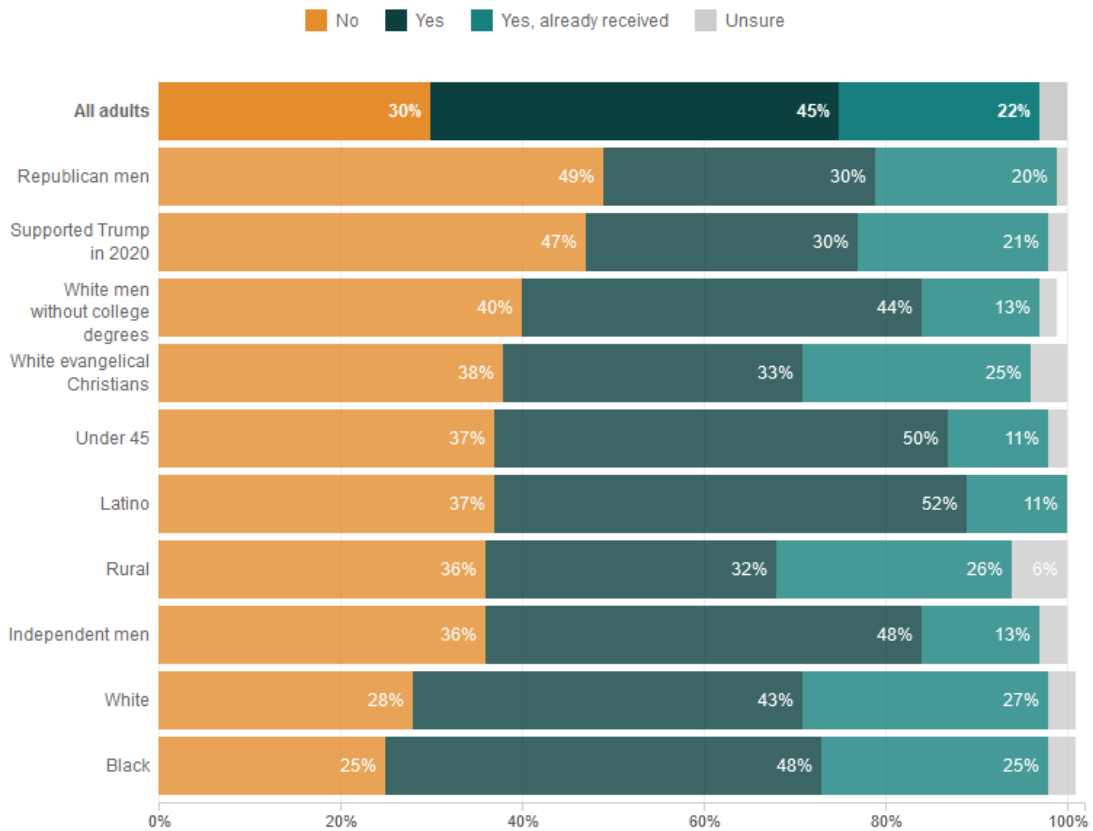
(KHN) New covid-19 infections among nursing home residents fell even more steeply, by 89%, in that period, compared with 58% in the general public, CMS and Johns Hopkins University data shows.

These numbers suggest that "the vaccine appears to be having a dramatic effect on reducing cases, which is extremely encouraging," said Beth Martino, spokesperson for the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living, an industry group

Full story: <https://khn.org/news/article/covid-cases-plummet-among-nursing-home-staffers-despite-vaccine-hesitancy/>

**Related story - Little Difference In Vaccine Hesitancy Among White and Black Americans, Poll Finds**

If a vaccine for the coronavirus is made available to you, will you choose to be vaccinated?



Source: NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll of 1,227 U.S. adults conducted between March 3 and March 8. The margin of error for the overall sample is 3.4 percentage points. Totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Credit: Thomas Wilburn/NPR

NPR story link: <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2021/03/12/976172586/little-difference-in-vaccine-hesitancy-among-white-and-black-americans-poll-find>

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**OSHA launches COVID-19 National Emphasis Program**

(From [AHA Today](#)) The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued a [National Emphasis Program](#) related to COVID-19 enforcement that expands upon OSHA's current enforcement efforts by targeting specific high-hazard industries or activities where the risk of workers contracting COVID-19 is substantial.

Link to OSHA Directive: [https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/enforcement/directives/DIR\\_2021-01\\_CPL-03.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/enforcement/directives/DIR_2021-01_CPL-03.pdf)

## New findings spur call to reduce improper antibiotic use in hospitals

(CIDRAP) A national panel of experts is calling for steep reductions in inappropriate antibiotic use in hospitals in response to a new study that found that antibiotic treatments in hospital patients frequently deviates from recommendations.

The [study](#), led by researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and published yesterday in *JAMA Network Open*, found that 56% of antibiotic use was unsupported in patients being treated at US hospitals in 2015 because the patients didn't have specific signs or symptoms of infections, the wrong antibiotic was prescribed, or the length of treatment was too long.

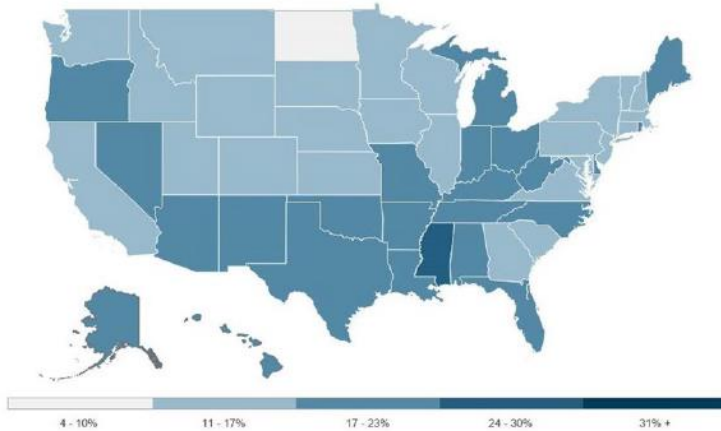
Specifically, the study found that 79% of all antibiotic treatments for community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) and 77% for urinary tract infections (UTIs) were inappropriate, while 46% of all fluoroquinolone and 27% of all intravenous vancomycin treatment was inappropriate.

Based on these findings, a panel convened by the Pew Charitable Trusts that includes infectious disease, public health, and antibiotic stewardship experts from the CDC and medical centers across the country [has determined](#) that inappropriate antibiotic treatments for CAP and UTIs could be reduced by 90%, while unnecessary fluoroquinolone and vancomycin use could be reduced by 95%.

Learn more: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/03/new-findings-spur-call-reduce-improper-antibiotic-use-hospitals>

## Need Amid Plenty: Richest US Counties Are Overwhelmed by Surge in Child Hunger

Figure 1. Projected rates of food insecurity among the overall population in 2020 by state



(Kaiser Health News) Hunger among kids is skyrocketing, even in America's wealthiest counties. But given the nation's highly uneven charitable food system, affluent communities have been far less ready for the unprecedented crisis than places accustomed to dealing with poverty and hardship.

Data from the anti-hunger advocacy group [Feeding America](#) and the U.S. Census Bureau shows that counties seeing the largest estimated increases in child food insecurity in 2020 compared with 2018 generally have much higher median household incomes than counties with the smallest increases.

Learn more: <https://khn.org/news/article/richest-us-counties-overwhelmed-by-surge-in-child-hunger/>

## US grid at rising risk to cyberattack, says GAO

(The Hill) Distribution systems within the U.S. electrical grid are increasingly vulnerable to cyberattack, a government watchdog [said in a report](#) released Thursday.

In the report, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that the Department of Energy's cybersecurity strategy has predominantly focused on generation and transmission systems. The watchdog recommended further attention to risks facing distribution systems, those parts of the grid that actually carry power directly to customers. Those aspects of the grid, the report states, "are becoming more vulnerable to cyberattacks, in part due of the introduction of and reliance on monitoring and control technologies."

Distribution systems' vulnerability is increasing due to their industrial control systems, which have increasingly been incorporating remote access. As a result, they can give bad actors access to them.

The systems the report analyzed generally are not covered by federal cybersecurity standards but have in some cases taken independent action on them. The Department of Energy's (DOE) cybersecurity plans do not fully cover the risks to distribution networks, according to the GAO report.

Learn more: <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/543831-government-watchdog-energy-department-must-address-cyber-threats-to>

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact [Preparedness@kyha.com](mailto:Preparedness@kyha.com) (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.