



## COVID-19 Daily Update March 18, 2021

New or updated information is in red and bold

This update is available online at [healthvermont.gov/covid19](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19)  
Click the “See the Daily Update” button

### **Additional COVID-19 Variant Detected in Vermont**

The Vermont Department of Health has confirmed that genomic sequencing of COVID-19 specimens has now identified two of the [variants of concern](#) circulating in the U.S.

In addition to results earlier this month of the B.1.1.7 variant that originated in the U.K., recent lab results now show the B.1.429 strain, first identified in California, is also in Vermont. The B.1.1.7 variant has now been found in eight specimens, and the B.1.429 variant was detected in three specimens. The labs report the detections were found in samples from Chittenden and Franklin Counties, with one sample’s county of origin pending.

Viruses constantly change through mutation, and new variants and strains are to be expected. Many emerge and disappear, but others can persist and even become the predominant strain.

The Health Department has sent 98 select samples to the Massachusetts Public Health Laboratory, Molecular Diagnostics and Virology program for genetic sequencing. The department has also sent 60 samples to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The specimens are taken from people who had already tested positive for COVID-19.

Health officials said while it is not surprising that the variants continue to be detected, it reinforces concerns of increased cases, illness and outbreaks.

“These variants of the COVID-19 virus can move more easily from person to person,” said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD. “This is setting us up for a race of sorts between the presence of strains of a highly contagious virus, our rapidly progressing vaccination program, and the need for each of us to continue to focus on prevention and getting tested.”

[Read the press release.](#)

## If you have any symptoms, stay home and get tested for COVID-19

The COVID-19 virus is still circulating in our communities, and the only way to know if you have it is to get tested.

Remember that [symptoms](#) can sometimes be mild, such as a headache, cough, fatigue or a runny nose. So, if you have even just one of these symptoms, it's best to get tested. It's also important to avoid going to work, school or other places until you receive a negative result. COVID-19 is a highly transmissible virus, and this is how we can each protect our loved ones and our communities.

If you have symptoms, talk to your health care provider. They can refer you for testing.

Testing is also important even if you don't have symptoms, since you can still have COVID-19 and not feel sick.

If you don't have symptoms and want to get tested, there are [many test sites](#) now available around the state. It's free and easy! [Watch a video about what to expect.](#)

## Video Answers Questions About COVID-19 Vaccine & Pregnancy – in Multiple Languages

A new Health Department video, [Sara Asks](#), was inspired by community education sessions held with our partners to answer some commonly asked questions around the COVID-19 vaccine. This first video centers on pregnancy, breastfeeding, and fertility questions.

It is available in English, Arabic, Nepali, French and Swahili with more languages coming soon. The videos (and other resources) can be found on our [Multilingual Resources web page](#).

## New on healthvermont.gov

About 20% of outbreak-associated cases are attributed to workplaces. On average, there are 5 or fewer cases associated with an outbreak in a workplace, and nearly all of the cases associated with workplace outbreaks were among staff only. Learn more about workplace outbreaks in the latest [Weekly Data Summary Spotlight](#).

## COVID-19 Activity in Vermont

As of 12 p.m. on March 18, 2021

Data is updated daily.

Description	Number
New cases*	139 (17,247 total)
Currently hospitalized	21
Hospitalized in ICU	3
Hospitalized under investigation	0
Percent Positive (7-day average)	1.3%

People tested	344,436
Total tests	1,214,526
Total people recovered	14,507
Deaths+	217

Find more data on COVID-19 Activity at: [healthvermont.gov/currentactivity](https://healthvermont.gov/currentactivity).

### COVID-19 Vaccine Data

As of 12 p.m. on March 18, 2021

Data is updated Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Description	Number
Total people who have received least one dose of vaccine	161,250 (29.4% of population)
Total people who have received two doses of vaccine (completed)	86,662

Find more vaccine data on the COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard: [healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine-data](https://healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine-data).

### Additional Resources About Vaccination and More

- Find answers to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine from the CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html).
- Get Vermont-specific information in our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
- Sign up for [the COVID-19 Weekly Email Update](#).
- Find information sheets, posters and toolkits, as well as translated materials on our [Resources web page](#).

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