



Daily Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) **October 20, 2020**

New or updated information is in red and bold.

This update is available online at healthvermont.gov/covid19
Click the “See the Latest Update” button.

Please visit the Vermont Department of Health’s COVID-19 web and data pages
healthvermont.gov/covid19

Don’t let pandemic fatigue set in, Dr. Levine says

Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, said at Tuesday’s press conference that the Central Vermont outbreak tied to recreational hockey and broomball leagues is now at 34 confirmed cases. He emphasized that transmission did not necessarily occur on the ice, as contact tracing teams have learned of social interactions and carpooling that may have been factors in spread of the virus.

Dr. Levine acknowledged we are all facing pandemic fatigue — adjusting our routines, forgoing social and family activities, and being relentlessly reminded to wear a mask and keep a distance from one another.

But we still have to wait a little longer for a COVID vaccine, and we are seeing cases increase — both nationwide and closer to home, he said.

“As we start to head into the holiday season, I am asking us all to join together, to take a moment to re-center, to step back from pandemic fatigue and rededicate to doing everything we can to keep the virus from spreading,” he said.

Think carefully about travel, and know that if you do, you will most likely have to quarantine upon your return, he said.

“And take a hard line if you are not feeling well. Even a headache or a runny nose – things you wouldn’t think of as symptoms – could be a sign of the virus,” Dr. Levine said. “I say this based upon our epi teams experience – multiple instances where people have continued their daily activities while symptomatic. This is why kids may be sent home from school and day care, and why you should stay home from work if you have even these mild symptoms.”

The good news is, we already know what we need to do, he said.

“We just need to double down on prevention, and not roll the dice on risk,” Dr. Levine said. “Because one thing we do know is that when gambling with health the virus might really win. We have been a model for the nation, and if together we stay Vermont Strong, we can keep it that way.”

Dispose of your unused, unwanted & expired prescription drugs on Take Back Day

This Saturday, October 24, is Prescription Drug Take Back Day – when you can dispose of leftover prescription and over-the-counter drugs safely at a collection site near you.

Dr. Levine noted the Take Back Day scheduled for last April was cancelled due to the pandemic, “so this is a great opportunity to make up for lost time.”

“More than half of people who misuse prescription medication get it from a friend or relative – often straight out of the medicine cabinet,” Dr. Levine said. “We already know COVID-19 is taking a toll on Vermonters with substance use disorder, and unfortunately, we have seen an increase in opioid fatalities this year compared to last year. By disposing of medications safely – especially prescription painkillers – you can do your part to keep anyone from ever misusing them.”

So, this coming weekend, grab your unused medications, of course your mask, before heading to a drop-off location. Get more info at healthvermont.gov/doyourpart.

And remember, you don't have to wait for a Take Back Day either – many drug disposal sites in Vermont are permanent. Or you can request a free mail-back envelope through our website.

Time to Get Your Flu Shot

It's especially important for everyone to get their flu shot this year – when flu viruses and the new coronavirus may be spreading at the same time. Help keep flu out of the picture!

Go to healthvermont.gov/flu to learn more about the flu, the vaccine and find where to get a flu shot near you.

While there are no significant delays in the national flu vaccine supply or distribution, high demand may mean that some providers and pharmacies run out of vaccine before their next shipment. This is typical for the start of the season when initial demand is high. If your local pharmacies and providers don't yet have a supply, they will soon.

Who should get a flu shot?

- Anyone over 6 months old, with rare exceptions
- People in a [high-risk group](#) or who has underlying health conditions

Where can I get my flu shot?

- From your health care provider
- At your local pharmacy
- At a flu clinic near you

Case Information

Current COVID-19 Activity in Vermont
As of 12 p.m. on October 20, 2020

Description	Number
Total cases*	1,956 (10 new)
Currently hospitalized	0
Hospitalized under investigation	0
Total people recovered	1,701
Deaths+	58
People tested	179,713
Travelers monitored	605
Contacts monitored	86
People completed monitoring	9,757

* Includes testing conducted at the Health Department Laboratory, commercial labs and other public health labs.

+ Death occurring in persons known to have COVID-19. Death certificate may be pending.

Hospitalization data is provided by the Vermont Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Coalition and is based on hospitals updating this information.

Find more at the data dashboard: healthvermont.gov/currentactivity.

Guidance for Long-Term Care Facilities and Adult Day Programs

Find guidance for [long-term care facilities](#) and [adult day programs](#), on the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living's [Restart Vermont web page](#).

Guidance for Vermonters and Businesses

- If you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to the hospital.
- If you think you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), call your health care provider.
- Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet and wear a mask when near others.

Key Guidance:

- Health information, guidance and data: healthvermont.gov/covid19
- By sector guidance: accd.vermont.gov/covid-19
- Travel map and modeling: dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling

- Governor's actions: governor.vermont.gov/covid19response

Get the information you need at our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Return to School Guidance

- **Strong and Healthy Start:** [Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools](#)
 - [Strong and Healthy Start FAQ: Transitioning from Step II to Step III](#)
- **Mental Health:** [A Strong and Healthy Start: Social, Emotional and Mental Health Supports During COVID-19](#)
- **Sports:** [Fall Sports Programs for the 2020-2021 School Year](#)
- **Child care:** [Health Guidance for Child Care and Out of School Care](#)

More resources on our [Schools, Colleges and Child Care Programs web page](#).

Traveler Information

Visit our [Travel to Vermont](#) web page for continually updated information and guidance, including about quarantine requirements, testing, and to [sign up with Sara Alert for symptom check reminders](#).

The [cross-state travel map](#) is now updated each Tuesday.

Getting Tested for COVID-19

Anyone can get tested, but not everyone *needs* to get tested.

Talk with your health care provider If you think you should be tested for COVID-19.

- If you don't have a provider, dial 2-1-1, or contact the nearest [federally qualified health center](#) or one of Vermont's [free & referral clinics](#).

[Visit our testing web page](#) for more guidance and where to get tested if you do need it.

Take Care of Your Emotional and Mental Health

If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs emotional support, help is available 24/7:

- Call your [local mental health crisis line](#).
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255.
- Text VT to 741741 to talk with someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#).
- For more information visit healthvermont.gov/suicide.

Get self-help tips and connect to mental health services at [COVID Support VT](#).

See ways for [Coping with Stress](#).

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Information for the public can be found at <https://healthvermont.gov/covid19>.