



August 2023 Monthly Public Health Director Update

Although August is behind us, August was National Immunization month. If you are a good candidate for and interested in getting an immunization, now is the time to make it happen or make your plans. Your local health departments with work insurance carriers and/or provide services on a sliding scale for those who may not have coverage.

Below, you will see that we always see an increase in several illnesses when back to school.

I have also received a couple of calls from media asking about the recent increase in COVID cases. Yes, we are experiencing an increase in comparison to these last few months with 120 cases in August. Please keep in mind that local health departments and the Kentucky Department for Public Health are not counting cases, and the numbers we report do not include the self-tests which are not reportable. The numbers we report to you derive from CDC reports of hospital admissions and percentage of deaths related to COVID. It is my understanding that KDPH is soon to implement a new all inclusive dashboard that will address COVID numbers as well as a number of other issues. More to come.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

And thank you to our talented Regional Epidemiologist, Blake Johnson, for developing the monthly reports!!!

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August 2023 Update

August is National Immunization Awareness Month!



Did you know?

Vaccines are the most successful and cost-effective public health tool available for preventing disease and death.

Local Health Departments and Vaccines

Local health departments provide vaccines for infants, children and adults of all ages. These services can be provided on a sliding scale service to eliminate cost as a barrier to accessibility. If you have any questions regarding vaccines, the Marshall County Health Department at 270-527-1496.



Adults are often not aware they may need vaccines!

Vaccines are recommended by age and if a person has certain medical conditions. You may also need vaccines for life events, traveling, or employment.

Talk to your primary care or local health department about what vaccines are recommended for you!

[Click here to view the CDC's vaccine schedule.](#)

The World Health Organization estimates between 3.5 - 5 million deaths are prevented each year by vaccinations.

But more than 6 million childhood deaths worldwide are caused by vaccine preventable illnesses!

About 320,000 people get pneumococcal pneumonia every year, leading to over 150,000 hospitalizations.

Pneumococcal vaccines have been around since the 1970s.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) causes over 27,000 cancers in women and men each year.

HPV infections declined 81% among young women after vaccination was recommended in 2006.

Each year in the United States, an estimated 1 million people get shingles.

The shingles vaccine is a 2-dose vaccine and is more than 90% effective!

Public Health Topics of Interest

HAN Alerts

Sept. 1, 23: HAN ALERT: Vibrio vulnificus Infections associated with Warming Coastal Waters

Back-to-school Illnesses

Back to school, usually means an increase in illnesses such as Norovirus and RSV. While runny noses may be common, if your child has a fever of 100.1 or higher, or they have been vomiting, they could be contagious for illnesses, that can easily spread to others. In the fall, public health sees a rise in the following illnesses:

- Norovirus
- RSV
- Chickenpox
- Flu/Covid
- Pink Eye

While not an illness, when kids and teachers go back to school, there is traditionally an increase in individuals with lice.

Head Lice are not known to cause any significant health concerns on their own, they can be a nuisance and easily passed to others.

Respiratory Illnesses

The official 23-24 Influenza surveillance season will soon be upon us! Last year, Kentucky saw an early peak in Flu cases starting in early November and running through mid-December. It's recommended that individual should get their annual flu shot in late Sept-early October.

With colder weather and more time spent inside looming, RSV illness sees an increase in the colder months. An RSV vaccine is recommended for infants and adults that are 60 and older.

With school going back in session, Kentucky has seen an increase in Covid cases. This is likely due to individual waning immunity and a decrease in public health measures. CDC's variant tracker shows that variant EG.5 (also known as Covid- Eris) is slightly increasing, while variant XBB.1.5 is on a downward trend.

The updated Covid booster is expected to be available in the Fall.

Marshall County Covid Cases, August 2023
n=120

