

# This Month in Public Health

## in Seneca County

### September 20, 2021, Edition

### Headline News:

Leaders of Ohio’s Children’s Hospitals made a direct appeal to school superintendents on Sept 14 to require masks for staff and students during the current surge of the coronavirus. Why? More and more children ages 5-17 are getting sick with COVID-19, and our children’s hospitals are full.

- “Ohio is truly blessed to have some of the best children’s hospitals in the country. We pride ourselves on meeting the needs of our kids. Our commitment is really threatened right now. For a long time, COVID-19 was perceived as a disease that didn’t impact children. That’s not the case anymore. Today, 25 percent of COVID-19 cases are in kids. We’re feeling that in our children’s hospitals.” *Debbie Feldman, President/CEO of Dayton Children’s Hospitals*
- “Our inpatient numbers are the highest they’ve been. Our ICUs are caring for more patients than there’s ever been. More children are on ventilators than there has ever been. There are more children than ever entering our emergency departments and our urgent care centers. That impacts the care of all children, not just those that are COVID-19 positive.” *Patty Manning, MD, Chief of Staff, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center*
- "If we want our schools to stay open, the best way to do that is for those 12 and over to get vaccinated. But because those under 12 are still too young to be vaccinated, we need students who come in to school to wear a mask until we get through this." *Governor Mike DeWine*

### What’s Happening Among Our Kids?

- COVID-19 cases among children have increased 240% nationally since early July when the Delta variant began to surge. During that same period in Ohio, there has been a 2000% increase in cases among Ohio children.
- Between Aug 15 and Sept 13, 2021, there have been 29,823 Ohio school-aged kids ages 5-17 with confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19. Cases in this age group **increased 198%** over the 3-week period of Aug 15 to Sept 4.
- **COVID-19 cases are increasing at nearly twice the rate among school-aged kids as compared to the rest of the population.** This past week, Ohio saw a 44% increase among school-aged children and only a 17% increase among the rest of the population.
- **Many districts across Ohio have had more cases in the first 3-4 weeks of this school year than they did during the entire 2020/2021 school year.**



Why? 1) The Delta variant spreads much more easily than previous variants. 2) Most kids aren’t vaccinated, so they’re at greater risk. 3) The multiple layers of protection in place last year (e.g., masking at school and in indoor settings, physical distancing, smaller gatherings) are now absent. Without these layers of defense, more children are becoming infected and more classmates are being exposed.

- **In Ohio school districts where masks are optional,** among school-aged kids, there are **both higher case rates** per 100,000 at 945.7 **and a greater week-over-week increase in cases** (54% week-over-week increase in school districts where masks are optional vs. 34% increase in districts where masks are required for all or some students (usually K-8th grade)).
- **We’ve seen a dramatic increase in cases among Seneca County children, teens, and young adults:**

# of New Cases Among Seneca County Youth Ages 0-19	June 1-30, 2021	July 1-31, 2021	Aug 1-31, 2021	Sept 1-Sept 17, 2021	* At this rate, we could have 200- 400 new youth cases during the month of Sept!
Females	0	1	32	53	
Males	2	4	29	60	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>113*</b>	

### Current CDC COVID-19 Guidance

- **All people, regardless of vaccination status, should wear masks in public indoor settings** in areas of substantial or high transmission.
- **Children should return to full-time in-person learning with layered prevention strategies in place. Universal indoor masking is recommended for teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.**

## What Else is Happening?

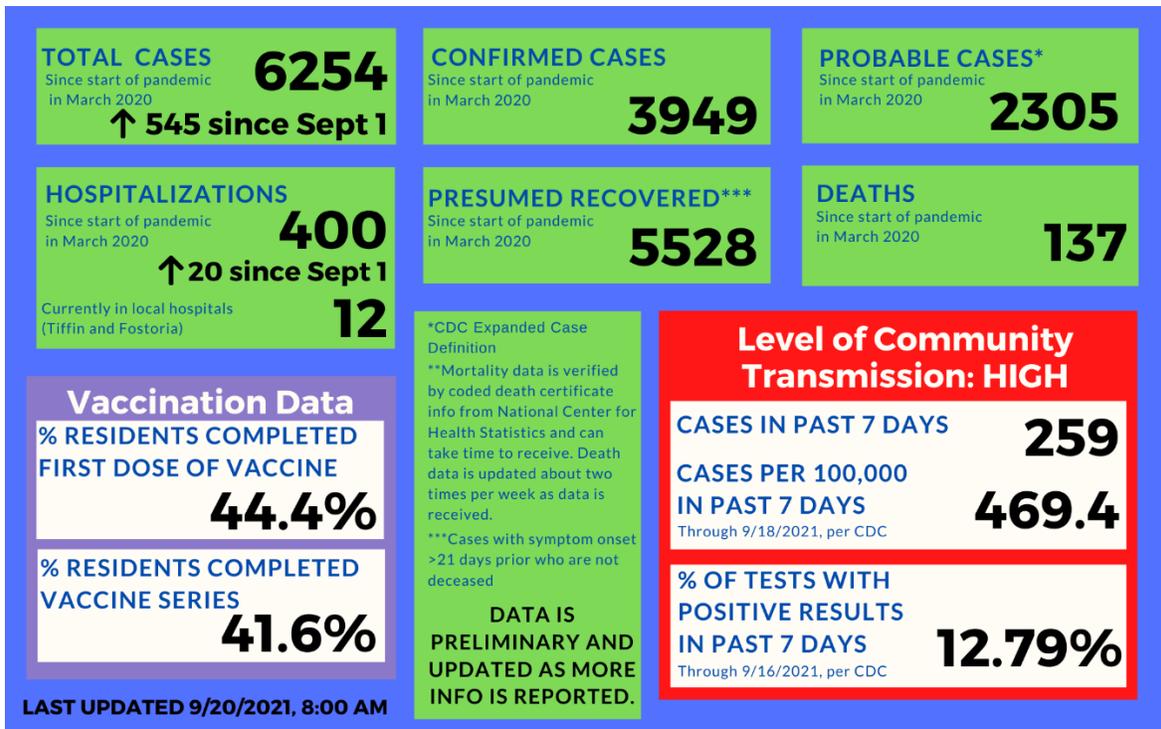


**Hospitals throughout northwest Ohio are FULL.** Earlier this week, all emergency rooms (ERs) in Lucas County were full, and EMS units had to divert patients to hospitals outside the county.

**ERs are being swamped by asymptomatic people seeking COVID-19 tests.** However, ERs are NOT where you should go when you don't have symptoms of severe illness. ERs full of people wanting COVID-19 testing means that people having heart attacks, strokes, asthma attacks, etc., or injured in motor vehicle accidents being unable to get the quick, life-saving care they

need.

- We post current COVID-19 stats Monday through Friday on our website [www.senecahealthdept.org](http://www.senecahealthdept.org) and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SCGHD>. Here's the latest information....



## If I Shouldn't Go to the ER for COVID-19 Testing (Because I Feel Fine), Where SHOULD I Go?

- More appropriate testing locations are urgent cares, doctor offices, community health centers/clinics, and pharmacies. Most have limited supplies and therefore require appointments, so it's important to call in advance.

- Tiffin Community Health Center, 1344 W Seneca Avenue, Tiffin; (419) 455-8140
- Community Health Services- Fostoria, 502 Van Buren Street, Fostoria; (419) 334-3869
- Walk In Urgent Care, 2562 W Market Street, Tiffin; (567) 938-8008
- CVS, 733 W Market Street, Tiffin; (419) 455-9071

Other retail pharmacies may also provide testing services, such as WalMart, Kroger's, and RiteAid. Check their websites or call your favorite location to find out if testing is available.

- Another option is using a **free Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Home Test**. It's done completely at home under the direct visual supervision of a telehealth provider (so a laptop, tablet, or smart phone is required). The state of Ohio has provided limited quantities of these tests to local health departments and public libraries. **Again, call ahead to make sure tests are available.**

- Seneca County General Health District, 71 S Washington Street, Suite 1102, Tiffin; (419) 447-3691- Unfortunately, we've exhausted our supply, and we're waiting on another shipment. We'll announce when more test kits are available on our Facebook page and our website ([www.senecahealthdept.org](http://www.senecahealthdept.org)).
- Seneca East Public Library, 14 North Main Street, Attica; (419) 426-3825
- Tiffin-Seneca Public Library, 77 Jefferson Street, Tiffin; (419) 447-3751 Tiffin; (419) 455-8140

