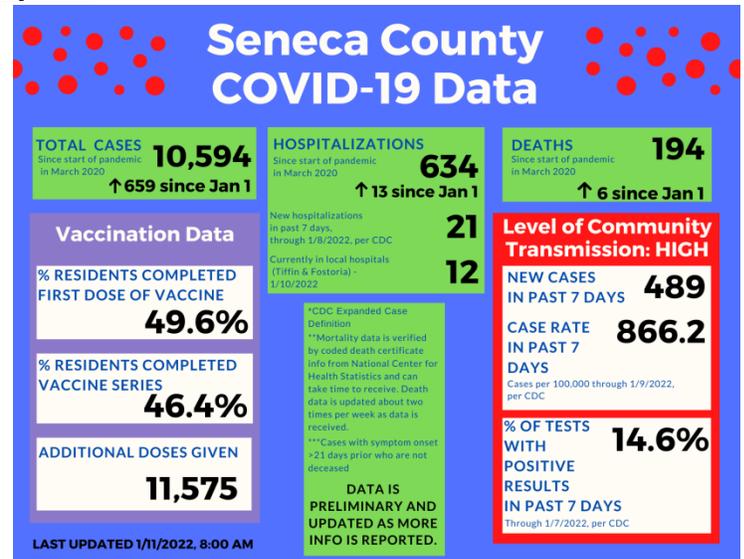


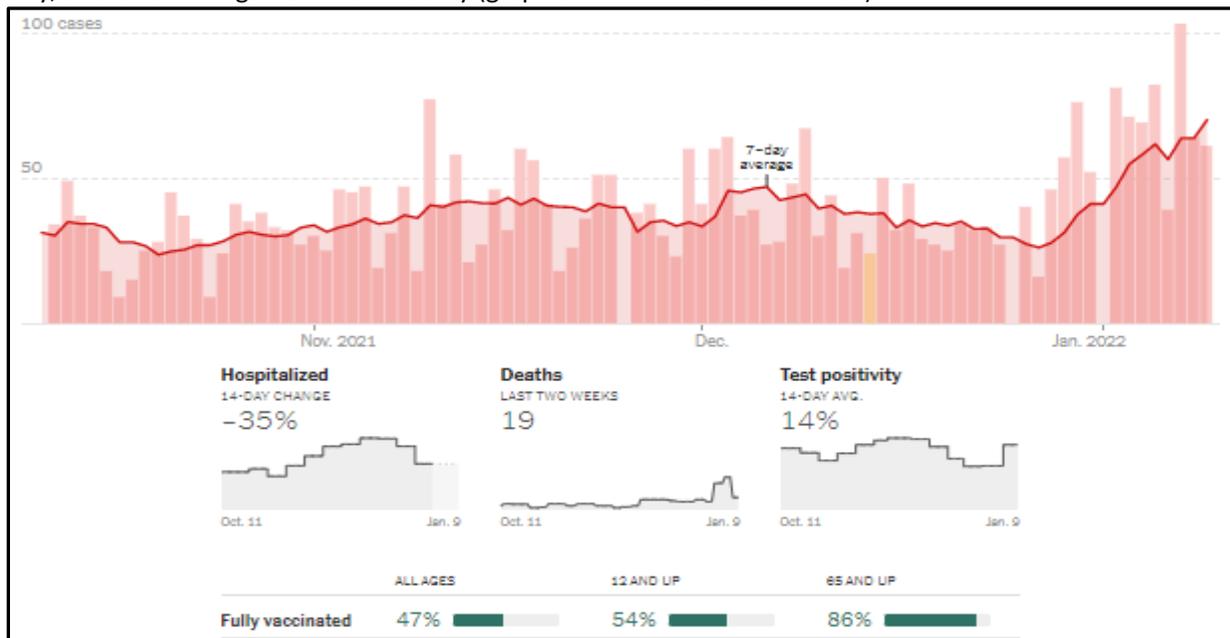
## A COVID-19 Update- in Seneca County and Beyond

### Summary:

- **Cases** of COVID-19 here in Seneca County have increased recently and are extremely high: **The total number reported in the past week was the highest in the entire pandemic** (higher than when we didn't have a vaccine!).
- The number of **hospitalized COVID-19 patients has fallen in the past week in the Seneca County area, while deaths have remained at about the same level.**
- The **test positivity rate locally is very high, suggesting that cases are being underreported.**
- This data reflects only tests reported to and entered in the Ohio Disease Reporting System. These numbers do not reflect the numerous home tests that we know are being done.



Graphically, this is how things look in our county (graphic from *The New York Times*):



### New Cases Continue to Increase . . . Everywhere!

- The rate of new COVID-19 cases in Seneca County was higher than for Ohio and the nation until mid-December.
- Our local rate started to increase at Christmastime, whereas state and national rates started climbing a week earlier. State and national rates may continue to climb for several more weeks, making it likely that the rate of new cases in Seneca County won't peak until late January or early February.
- While the easily-transmissible Omicron variant is probably the main reason for this surge, this data also reflects the increases that we've seen after every major holiday.
- Seneca County's rate of new cases ranks 66<sup>th</sup> lowest in Ohio for the past 2 weeks- another sign that we are probably facing many more cases over the next several weeks.

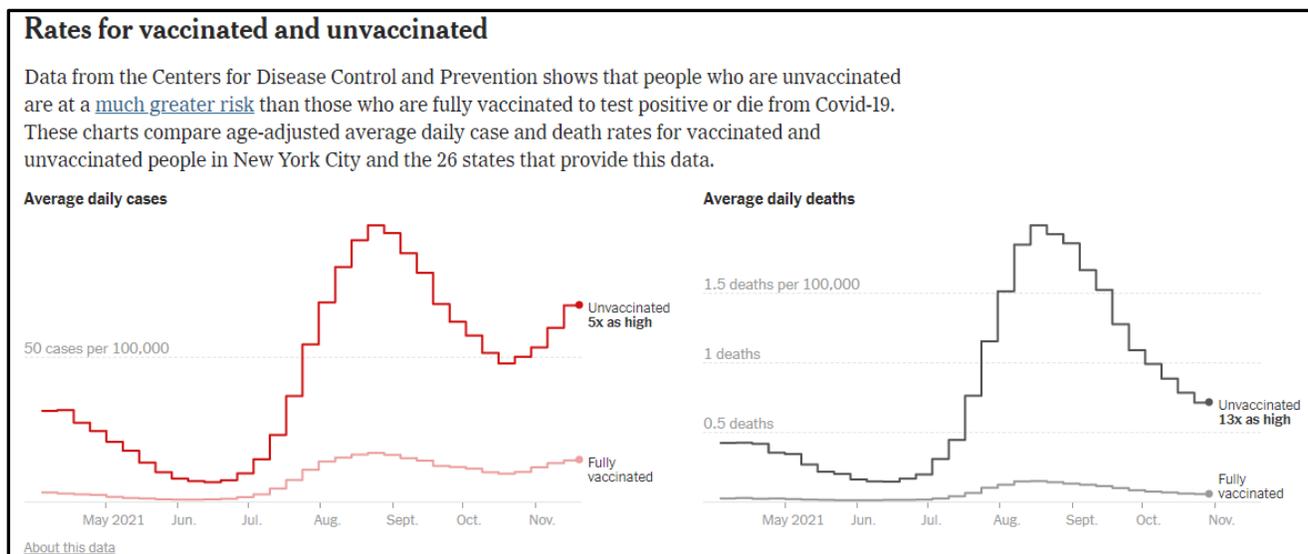
## Hospitalizations Are Increasing Too

While the Omicron variant does not appear to cause more severe illness than the Delta variant, it is infecting many more people. As a result, hospital admissions are also climbing across the state.

- Ohio hospitals are dealing with an unprecedented numbers of COVID-19 patients. In fact, our state ranks #6 in the nation for the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations (and #4 for COVID deaths) in the past 7 days.
- 6,749 persons with COVID-19 were hospitalized in Ohio yesterday (1 in every 3 patients). COVID patients accounted for 1 in every 3 ICU patients. 42% of all patients on ventilators have COVID-19.
- In NW Ohio, 765 patients with COVID were hospitalized yesterday (1 in every 3 patients). COVID patients accounted for 1 in every 3 ICU patients. 47% of all patients on ventilators have COVID-19.
- Here in Seneca County, the number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients dropped from 16 to 12 over the past 5 days, with the number of COVID patients in the ICUs dropping from 5 to 1. COVID-19 patients currently account for 44% of all in-patients and 33% of ICU patients. 100% of patients on ventilators have COVID-19.

## Vaccinations Make a Difference!

This graphic from *The New York Times* illustrates how vaccinations effectively protect against severe COVID-19 illness (defined as illness resulting in hospitalization or death). Ohio Department of Health data reveals that only 5.6% of Ohio residents hospitalized for COVID-19 have been fully vaccinated (meaning 94.4% were not), while 95.5% of COVID deaths have occurred among people who weren't fully vaccinated.



Source: The New York Times; <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/covid-cases.html>. Accessed 1/10/2022.

## Will vaccines work against Omicron?

Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. However, breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are occurring more frequently, especially among people who have not received their booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

Data from South Africa and the U.K. shows that 2 doses of an mRNA vaccine (i.e., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) is ~35% effective at preventing COVID-19 infection with the Omicron variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. **With the addition of a booster dose, vaccine effectiveness jumps to 75%.**

## What Are the Latest COVID-19 Vaccination Recommendations?

- People who received the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine are now eligible to receive their booster dose 5 months after they completed their initial series, instead of 6 months. The booster interval recommendation for people who received the J&J vaccine (2 months) or the Moderna vaccine (6 months) has not changed yet.
- Consistent with prior recommendations for adults, moderately or severely immunocompromised 5–11-year-olds should receive an additional primary dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine 28 days after their second shot.
- Adolescents ages 12 to 17 should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series.