

Three Minute Read™

Insights from the Healing American Healthcare Coalition™

August 2021-2



From the Editor: With Covid-19's delta variant raging in states with low vaccination rates, the articles summarized in this issue focus solely on the latest vaccine news. To access each article, just click on the headline.



[CDC urges COVID vaccines during pregnancy as delta surges](#), by Lindsey Tanner and Mike Stobbe, Associated Press, 8/11/21
TMR Topline™ - The CDC is urging all pregnant women to get the Covid-

19 vaccine as hospitals are seeing disturbing numbers of unvaccinated mothers-to-be seriously ill with the virus. About 23% have received at least one dose of vaccine. A CDC analysis of safety data on 2,500 women showed no increased risks of miscarriage for those who received at least one dose of the vaccine before 20 weeks of pregnancy. Pregnancy-related changes in body functions may explain why the virus can be dangerous for mothers-to-be. These include reduced lung capacity and adjustments in the disease-fighting immune system that protect and help the fetus grow. The new advice also applies to nursing mothers and women planning to get pregnant.



[CDC Recommends 3rd Vaccine Dose For Immunocompromised People](#), by Joe Neel, NPR, 8/13/21

TMR Topline™ - Following FDA approval, the CDC is recommending a third shot of the Pfizer or

Moderna vaccine for immunocompromised people (2.7% of U.S. adults, about 7 million). One U.S. study shows 40-

44% of hospitalized breakthrough cases are in immune-compromised people. People with [the following conditions](#) should take a third dose:

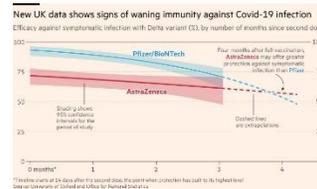
- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood.
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last two years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency.
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response.



[Get Vaccinated Even If You've Gotten COVID-19, Study Suggests](#), by Frank Diamond and Kevin Kavanaugh, MD, Infection

Control Today, 8/13/21

TMR Topline™ - A recent [study](#) in the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* examined data from Kentucky residents who were infected with Covid-19 in 2020, then identified those reinfected in May and June 2021. Unvaccinated residents with natural immunity were 2.3 times more likely to have breakthrough infections than those Covid-19 survivors who were vaccinated.



[New data shows waning COVID-19 vaccine efficacy, building case for boosters](#), by Lisa M. Krieger, Bay Area News

Group, 8/18/21

TMR Topline™ - Three new studies released by the CDC show that protection from infection has been waning since earlier this year. In one study, the decline was modest, dropping from 92% to 80%. In the second, it

was more dramatic, falling from 75% to 53%. A third study found that protection fell from 76% to 42% among recipients of the Pfizer vaccine and from 86% to 76% among recipients of the Moderna vaccine. These findings are spurring the campaign to boost Americans' immunity by administering a third dose of the vaccine. "You don't want to find yourself behind, playing catch up," said NIAID Director Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, noting that a "booster" vaccine can trigger a sudden, ten-fold jump in antibody levels. Pending consent from the FDA and the CDC, boosters will be available starting the week of September 20th.



[Biden says some Americans will be eligible for booster shots in September.](#) by Sharon LaFraniere and Apoorva Mandavilli, New York Times, 8/18/21

TMR Topline™ - President Biden announced several steps being taken to combat the spread of Covid-19's delta variant including strongly recommending booster shots for vaccinated Americans, directing the Education Secretary to "use all of his authority, and legal action if appropriate," to deter states from banning universal masking in classrooms, and making employee vaccination a condition for nursing homes to receive Medicare and Medicaid funding. Senior federal officials said that the booster strategy stemmed from new data showing that vaccine efficacy against infection and mild disease wanes over time.



[As U.S. promotes booster shots against Covid, moral questions arise over vaccine equity,](#) by Erik Ortiz, NBC News, 8/18/21

TMR Topline™ - The announcement that Covid-19 booster shots will be available to all Americans next month triggered an immediate response from Dr. Michael Ryan, emergencies chief at the WHO: "We're planning to hand out extra life jackets to people who already have life jackets, while we're leaving other people to drown without a single life jacket." CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky addressed the criticism: "I don't think this is a choice in terms of if we have to choose one or the other. We're going to do both and we have been doing both," noting that the U.S. anticipates giving 100 million booster shots by the end of the year, while distributing 200 million vaccines worldwide.



[How Full FDA Approval Could Spur Vaccination,](#)

by Drew Altman, Axios, 8/13/21

TMR Topline™ -

KFF President and CEO Drew Altman is widely respected as a leading expert on health policy issues – and has New Jersey roots. Early in his career, he served as Commissioner of the Department of Human Services and VP at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Data from KFF Vaccine Monitor surveys indicate that 31% of the unvaccinated would be more likely to get vaccinated if the FDA moved vaccines from an EUA to full approval. [More than half](#) are unsure what the status of FDA approval is. Approval also offers an opportunity to clear up substantial public confusion. **Bottom line:** It's the next, and probably the last, big opportunity to sharpen and drive home a clear message that the COVID vaccines are safe and effective.

TMR Take – Altman's right! America's war against the "pandemic of the unvaccinated" is beginning to feel like a 21st century equivalent of the Civil War. Its mission – eliminate an outrageously contagious and deadly virus. It's appalling that many states now look like Queens did in April 2020 when New York Metro was the epicenter of the global pandemic. Mississippi, Louisiana, Arizona, Alabama and South Dakota now have per capita fatality rates comparable to the northeastern states that were hit hard early. Did they learn nothing or did their leaders choose to ignore the science?

A recent Commonwealth Fund [study](#) shows that Florida and Texas could have averted 4,700 deaths by the end of July if their vaccination coverage was comparable to the five highest-performing states (Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, and Rhode Island with 74% of adults fully vaccinated). In his newsletter, Dr. Sanjay Gupta cited a [study](#) that found that other mitigation measures – such as physical distancing and handwashing – are "insufficient by themselves" in curbing the pandemic without [mask use](#), too. Yet, Governors Abbott and DeSantis have banned masks in schools. Last century, the comedic duo of Abbott & Costello was frightfully funny; today, the gubernatorial duo of Abbott & DeSantis is just frightening. In the ultimate irony, [Fox News](#) has mandated that its employees must upload their vaccine status into an internal database. So, ignore their anchors, heed your physician and **GET VACCINATED!**