



Public Health Brief

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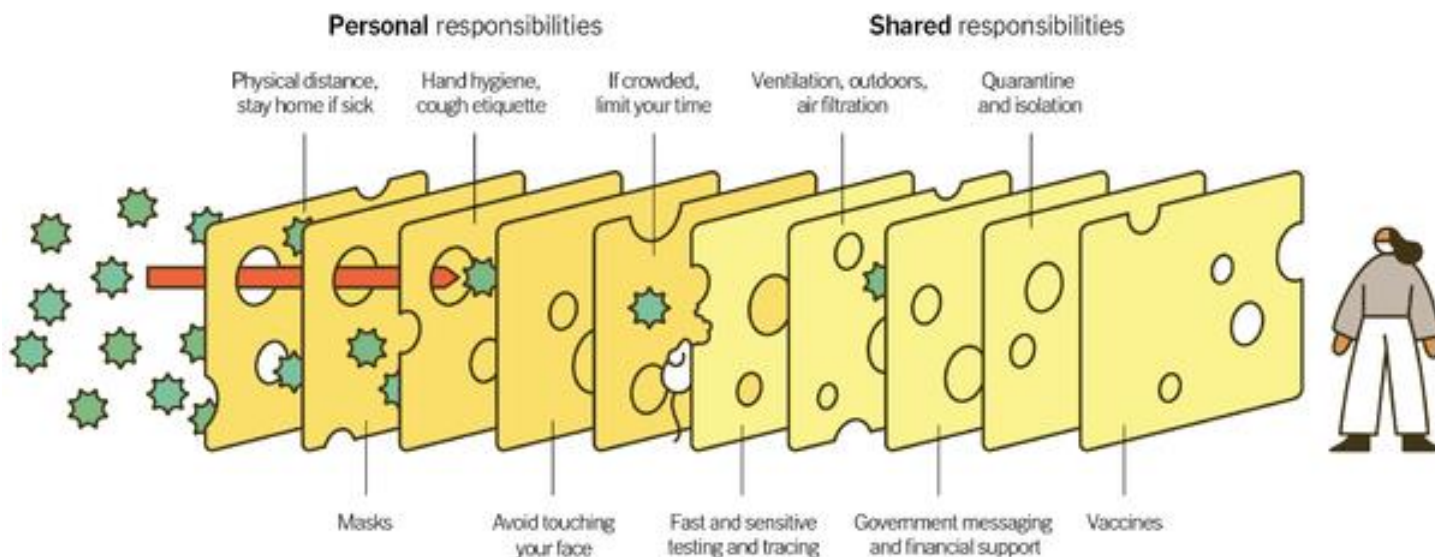


Friday May 27, 2022

“It ain’t over till it’s over!”

Multiple Layers Improve Success

The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Pandemic Defense recognizes that no single intervention is perfect at preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Each intervention (layer) has holes.



Source: Adapted from Ian M. Mackay (virologydownunder.com) and James T. Reason. Illustration by Rose Wong

You may attribute this saying to Yogi Berra in 1973, or Lenny Kravitz in 1991, but let’s apply it to COVID-19. Is it over? No. When will it be over? We do not know. Should we all agree to “live with it”, or do everything in our power as individuals and a society to win this war? It is not the time to quit!



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District 1: January Riddle, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Irvin Jim,
District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

I know all of us are suffering from pandemic fatigue, and many of you are grieving the loss of a loved one or know of someone who has persistent symptoms following an infection, known as “long COVID”. We highlighted that risk in yesterday’s Public Health Brief, and the need for vaccination including boosters. However, there is much more that we can do, individually and collectively.

First, what is the current situation?

WORLD: The [WHO COVID-19 Dashboard](#) reports 524.3 million cumulative cases and 6.28 million deaths worldwide as of May 25. The weekly trends are increasing in the Americas (+13.2%).

UNITED STATES: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([US CDC](#)) is reporting 83.4 million cumulative cases of COVID-19 and 1,000,254 deaths. As expected, the cumulative number of COVID-19 deaths surpassed 1 million on May 24. The current average daily incidence continues to increase, up to 104,399 on May 24 from 99,215 new cases per day on May 17. The daily mortality is fairly steady at an average of 288 deaths per day, and we have not yet observed an increase corresponding to the surge in daily incidence. [New COVID-19 hospital admissions](#) continue to trend upwards, with an increase of 14% over the past week. New cases are [now being driven by the the BA.2.12.1 sublineage](#) of Omicron (58%), which this week became the predominant variant over the BA.2 subvariant (39%).

CALIFORNIA: The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) ([Main Page \(ca.gov\)](#)) reports >10,000 new cases per day, with almost 2,000 individuals currently hospitalized, and an average of 8 deaths per day due to COVID. Numbers are beginning to surpass those from the last 2 summers, as it is predicted we are in another surge which may peak during the month of June. The large surge in new cases is being followed by a smaller increase in hospitalizations, but not a significant increase in deaths - so far! A total of almost 1,000 children have developed MIS-C (Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome) in California during the last 2 years. [For Parents: Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\) associated with COVID-19 | CDC](#)

ALPINE COUNTY: We are experiencing an increase in new cases with at least several per week, which would put us into the highest transmission category by the CDPH and CDC.

One must keep in mind that all case counts are much lower than the reality, as many folks have no symptoms, do not get tested even if they have symptoms, or test at home and do not report the result to us.

OMICRON SUBVARIANTS: The US recently began averaging [more than 100,000 new daily COVID-19 cases](#) for the first time since February. As of the end of last week, [58% of new US cases](#) are caused by the Omicron subvariant known as BA.2.12.1. There is [no indication](#) the variant causes more severe disease than previous Omicron variants, but new [hospitalizations also are increasing](#). However, BA.2.12.1—as well as the other Omicron sublineages BA.4 and BA.5, which the European



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Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC) have deemed [variants of concern](#) and are currently circulating at low levels in the US—are [even more transmissible](#) than the BA.1 version of Omicron that caused high caseloads in early 2022. The 3 sublineages also likely are capable of escaping some of the immunity produced by infection with BA.1 and BA.2. The consistent resurgence of viral variants creates [challenges to maintaining long-lasting defense](#) against COVID-19, but the best defense against severe disease and death remains staying up-to-date on vaccinations.

However, it takes a village, and a multi-layered approach to conquer this enemy. Vaccines are our best option, but by themselves are inadequate. As the Swiss cheese example shows, each layer of intervention has holes – some are personal responsibilities, and some are shared responsibilities for communities and government. Together we will have success! No, we do not have to live with COVID!

As we enter the Memorial Day weekend, summer is upon us. With our common desire to put the last 2 years behind us, and to catch up on all the social gatherings, travel, concerts, etc. that we have missed, our risk increases. Alpine County residents will bring new infections back into the community with them, and our visitors will bring infection with them and share it as they arrive from places with higher levels of transmission. Time to be vigilant! Take a look at the layered interventions and decide what you and your family will do to protect yourselves. There are no government mandates and orders restricting travel, requiring masks or vaccines – only recommendations.

Stay tuned!

- Big news on the near horizon – vaccines are likely to be approved for all down to the age of 6 months sometime in June.
- Big news on the distant horizons:
 - o New antivirals via nasal spray are being developed to treat and prevent all COVID infections including any new as yet unknown variant.
 - o New and improved vaccines are being developed, likely to be available later this year

Alpine County Public Health currently offers at **no charge**:

- o Moderna vaccine for all, 18 years of age and older
- o Home antigen tests for pick up 8-12 and 1-5 Monday through Friday
- o Professional antigen tests performed in our clinic
- o PCR tests after consultation with us
- o Paxlovid oral antiviral pills for treatment of mild-to-moderate cases following consultation and testing with us (known as Test2Treat)
- o A Warm Line, 530-694-2146, Option 1, for consultation with Dr. Johnson within 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Enjoy your Memorial Day weekend! Say safe and well!



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