

Consensus Statement

WNY COVID-19 Working Group

August 21, 2021

Healthcare providers should be aware of the following, and emphasize these points to patients:

- Currently the Working Group strongly recommends **wearing masks** indoors when not with your family or core group, and wearing masks outdoors in large gatherings, for both unvaccinated and vaccinated people. This recommendation is based on CDC guidance.
- **95% of recent COVID-19 deaths** among Erie County residents were people who were not fully vaccinated.
- The delta variant is **as transmissible as chicken pox**. COVID-19 vaccines provide good protection against moderate to severe disease, hospitalization, and death from the delta variant.
- COVID-19 vaccines prevent hospitalizations and deaths. It is still possible to get a COVID-19 infection after a vaccine. This does not mean the vaccine isn't working.
- If an individual has had COVID-19, they should get vaccinated because **natural immunity from a previous infection may not protect against the infection**. Individuals who are treated with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma should wait 90 days for the immunization.
- There is evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe during pregnancy. However, becoming infected with the **COVID-19 infection during pregnancy can cause poor outcomes** for moms and newborns, and challenges with fertility.
- The more people get vaccinated for COVID-19, the less the spread, and the less opportunity the virus will have to mutate into something worse.
- **There is no racial, ethnic or age group that is safe from COVID-19.**

Some references:

[Delta variant may evade natural immunity](#)

Post-infection immunity may be less than vaccine-induced immunity [Link 1](#) [Link 2](#)

[Vaccines protect against delta variant](#)



Erie County
Department of
Health



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Kaleida Health



NIAGARA FALLS
Memorial Medical Center
Exceptional care, exceptionally close.



Family Choice
OF NEW YORK



UB | MD
PHYSICIANS' GROUP



general
physician
pc



JERICHO ROAD
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
Division of Behavioral Medicine
University at Buffalo



MARTIN'S POINT
HEALTH CARE



Southern Tier
Health Care System Inc.



Lake Plains
Community Care
Network



CPA
Community Pediatric Associates
of Western New York



Rajinder Bajwa, MD
Niagara Falls Memorial
Medical Center

Gale Burstein, MD, MPH
Erie County Department of Health

Richard A. Carlson, Jr., MD
Primary Care IPA

Richard Charles, MD
General Physician, PC

Joe Chow, MD
WNY Immediate Care

Tyler Connine, MD
UB Emergency Medicine
Residency

Anne Constantino, MS
Horizon Corporations

Charlotte Crawford, RN, MSN, MBA
Lake Plains Community Care
Network

Tanvir Dara, MD
WellNow Urgent Care

Kathleen Dyson, MD
Community Pediatric Associates
of WNY

Aimana ElBahtity, Esq.
Medical Society of Erie County

John Fudyma, MD, MPH
Latus Medical Care

Ken Garbarino, MD
Family Choice of New York

Kevin Gibbons, MD
UBMD

Kathleen Grisanti, MD
Pediatric and Adolescent
Urgent Care of WNY

Karen L. Hall, EdD
Population Health Collaborative

Ed Heidelberger, MD, PhD
Bertrand Chaffee Hospital

Donna Kahm, SPHR
Southern Tier Health Care System

Allana Krolikowski, MD
Jericho Road

Jeffrey Lackner, Psy.D.
UB Division of Behavioral Medicine

Charlene Ludlow, RN, MHA
Erie County Medical Center

James C. Matteliano, DDS
Eighth District Dental Society

Jason Matuszak, MD
Excelsior Orthopaedics

Jennifer McVige, MD
Dent Neurologic Institute

Mike Merrill, MD, MS, MBA
Independent Health

Jamie Nadler, MD
Kaleida Health

Margaret Paroski, MD, MMM
Catholic Medical Partners

Sucharita Paul, MD, MPH
UBMD Emergency Medicine

Mark F. Perry, MD
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of
Western New York

John Sellick, DO, MS
VA Western New York Healthcare
System

Samuel Shatkin, MD
Aesthetic Associates Centre

Kevin Shiley, MD
Catholic Health

Stephen Turkovich, MD
Oishei Children's Hospital

Willie Underwood, MD, MSc, MPH
Buffalo Center for Health Equity

Raul Vazquez, MD
Urban Family Practice

Andrea J. Wanat, MA
Value Network IPA

Marty Wesolowski, DO, MBA
Martin's Point Healthcare

Joyce Zmuda, MD
Optimum Physician Alliance

The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations' support of this statement.

Legal Notice and Disclaimer: Please note that the information contained in these resources does not establish a standard of care, nor does it constitute legal or medical advice. These guidelines reflect the best available data at the time the information was prepared. The results of future studies may require revisions to the information in this guideline to reflect new data. This information is not intended to replace individual provider clinical judgment in the care of their patients. Neither this workgroup, or any contributor to this effort, makes any representations or warranties, express or implied, with respect to the information provided herein or to its use.