

## Spotlight Covid-19 Vaccination

All Montanans, age 12 and up are eligible to receive a Covid-19 Vaccination! Local Health Care Providers, The Fergus County Nurses Office, The Central Montana Health District, and Albertsons Pharmacy all have plenty of the vaccines available and strongly recommend vaccination.

### Covid-19 Vaccination Rates in Montana and Fergus County Source-Montana DPHHS

In Montana 57% of eligible Montanans have had at least one dose (51% Fully Vaccinated). In Fergus County, 48% of eligible residents have had at least one dose (45% Fully Vaccinated). The following is a breakdown of vaccination status by age in Montana and Fergus County. It shows the percentage of eligible residents that have received at least one dose as of September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

<b>Age 12-17:</b> Montana 36% Fergus County 19%
<b>Age 18-29:</b> Montana 42% Fergus County 24%
<b>Age 30-39:</b> Montana 51% Fergus County 38%
<b>Age 40-49:</b> Montana 55% Fergus County 38%
<b>Age 50-59:</b> Montana 57% Fergus County 48%
<b>Age 60-69:</b> Montana 72% Fergus County 64%
<b>Age 70-79:</b> Montana 81% Fergus County 75%

Montana/Fergus County Vaccination Rates

### Covid-19 Cases and Hospitalizations in Montana: Source-Montana DPHHS

Recently, there has been an increase in Covid-19 cases and hospitalizations in Montana. Increases in hospitalizations place a large burden on an already stressed health care system and the health care workers who care for patients. This not only applies to Covid-19 patients- vital health care resources are utilized making it difficult to treat accident victims, other illnesses, and perform surgeries. A large majority of current hospitalized Covid-19 patients are unvaccinated. The following is a breakdown of Covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths in Montana from July 10<sup>th</sup>-Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> based on vaccination status.

During this time period there were 941 hospitalizations and 115 deaths reported in Montana.

<b><u>Hospitalizations:</u></b> Total 941	<b><u>Deaths:</u></b> Total 115
Unvaccinated: 778 (83%)	Unvaccinated: 83 (72%)
Vaccinated: 163 (17%)	Vaccinated: 32 (28%)
Median Age: 63 years	Median Age: 75 years
Age Range: <1-97 years	Age Range: 38-96 years

Additionally, the hospitalization data was further broken down by age. In ages less than 18, there were 11(1%) hospitalized. For 18-44 year olds, 164(17%) were hospitalized. For ages 45-64, 318(34%) were hospitalized, and 448(48%) were over age 65.

## Vaccines

The data on Covid-19 vaccinations shows that they have been effective in preventing Covid-19 infections, severe illness, and death including against the Delta Variant which has been the predominant variant in Montana for the past few months. Being vaccinated also decreases the chance of spreading the virus to others.

Most people develop only mild to moderate side effects from the vaccination, and some experience no side effects. The most common reported side effects are pain, redness and swelling at the site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea. Side effects are often more severe after the second dose. Severe allergic reactions/anaphylaxis have occurred but are very uncommon. Rare cases of Myocarditis and Pericarditis have been associated with the Pfizer and Moderna Vaccine. Rare cases of blood clots with low levels of platelets and Guillan Barre syndrome have been associated with the Janssen (J&J) Vaccine. The known and potential benefits of the vaccination outweigh the known and potential risks. Covid-19 vaccinations are strongly encouraged for everyone age 12 and older! (Those who have had an allergic reaction to an ingredient in the vaccines should not get vaccinated.)

The Moderna vaccine is a two shot series for ages 18 and up. The Janssen (J& J) vaccine is one shot vaccine for ages 18 and up. The Pfizer vaccine is a two shot series for ages 12 years and up. Additionally, the Pfizer vaccine recently received full FDA approval for ages 16 and up. The official name of the FDA approved vaccine is Comirnaty, and has the same formulation as the EUA Pfizer vaccine. The Pfizer, J&J, and Moderna are all available right here in Lewistown! If you would like a specific vaccine manufacturer, contact the Fergus County Nurses Office at 535-7433 or Central Montana Health District at 535-3983, and they will point you in the right direction.

Mitigation strategies to stop the virus include: Vaccination, Social Distancing, Avoiding Large Gatherings, Masking, Handwashing, Hygiene, and Cleanliness. If you are not feeling well, please don't be around others and do follow public health guidance.

**We can all do our part to keep ourselves and our community healthy!**