

Delaware meets President Biden's COVID-19 vaccination goal before July 4

Governor John Carney announced that Delaware met President Biden's initial COVID-19 vaccination goal on July 1.

"Delawareans have pulled together, done their part and gotten vaccinated to protect their families, friends and communities...we reached President Biden's target of 70 percent of adults receiving at least one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine by July 4," Governor Carney said. "That's a big deal. It's why we're beating this virus and moving past this pandemic after a long 16 months."

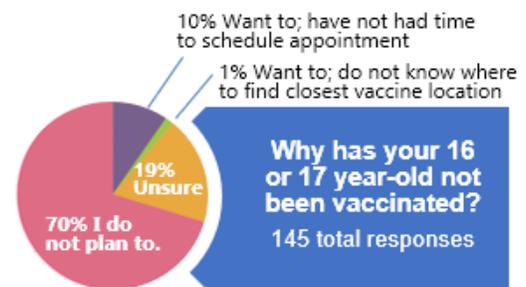
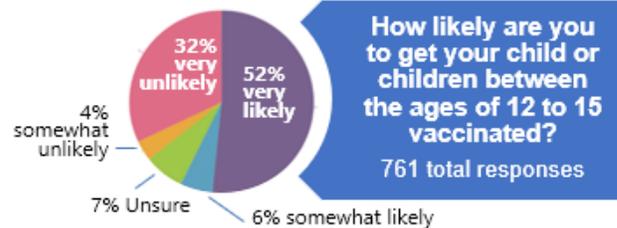
Division of Public Health (DPH) Director Dr. Karyl Rattay agreed, saying: "A huge thank you to everyone who has gotten vaccinated so far and helped us beat this virus back. Even as we celebrate this significant moment in time, we are continuing our efforts to get more Delawareans vaccinated. We especially want to encourage 18- to 34-year-olds who are most likely to be out and socializing with others to get the vaccine as soon as possible. It's free, it's safe, and it's effective at preventing COVID, so don't wait."



At left, Delaware National Guard (DNG) member Lixin Wang vaccinates Melissa D. at Whatcoat Village Apartments in Dover. The DNG and the Division of Public Health set up a mobile vaccination unit there on June 15. Photo by Sharon Smith.

in Delaware according to DPH's data portal, [My Healthy Community](#). To find vaccination sites, visit de.gov/getmyvaccine or call 1-833-643-1715.

Willingness of Delaware parents and guardians to have children vaccinated for COVID-19



Source: Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health survey, June 2021.

Delaware Rural Health Initiative lauded for its coordinated work on the opioid, mental health, and COVID-19 crises

The Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association announced that the Delaware Rural Health Initiative (DRHI) received the Executive Director's Public Health Recognition Award. The award is given to a Delaware nonprofit organization that has shown outstanding leadership and dedication to community improvement.

"[It is] very heartening to see people coming together and to create a consensus agenda of issues to work on: the opioid crisis, the mental health crisis, and the response to the COVID crisis this past year," said Division of Public Health (DPH) Director Dr. Karyl Rattay. "It really shows you how incredibly important partnerships are in addressing health issues."

DRHI addresses shared regional health concerns in a coordinated manner. Learn about DRHI's work at <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/chca/ruralhthinit.html>.





Heat-related illnesses are dangerous

Heat-related illness occurs when a person's body temperature rises faster than it can cool itself down. It can damage the brain and other vital organs.

Heat stroke and heat exhaustion are the two most dangerous heat-related illnesses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The warning signs of heat stroke are: a body temperature above 103° Fahrenheit; red, hot, and dry skin with no sweating; a rapid, strong pulse; a throbbing headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; and unconsciousness. Call 9-1-1 immediately to prevent death or permanent disability. Move victims to shade and spray them with water from a garden hose or immerse them in cool water.

The warning signs of heat exhaustion are: heavy sweating; paleness; muscle cramps; tiredness; weakness; dizziness; headache; nausea or vomiting; fainting; cool and moist skin; a fast and weak pulse; and fast and shallow breathing. Have victims drink cool, non-alcoholic beverages; take cool showers, baths, or sponge baths; and rest in an air-conditioned place. Get medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour. Untreated heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.

Those at high risk of heat-related illness are infants and children 4 years old and younger, the elderly, outdoor workers, athletes, and people who are low-income, obese, and have cardiovascular and mental health conditions. Other risks are having a fever or sunburn, being dehydrated, and drinking alcohol. During hot weather, drink cool water and non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated beverages every hour. Do not wait until you are thirsty. Stay in air-conditioned places and wear light, loose-fitting clothing.

For more information, visit the CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heattips.html>.

Avoid ticks to prevent Lyme disease

Lyme disease, caused by bites from the blacklegged or deer tick, is the state's most common tick-borne disease. The ticks can transmit the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, to humans and animals.

Lyme disease symptoms include an expanding red, "bull's-eye" rash, fever and chills, fatigue, severe headaches, muscle and joint aches, heart palpitations, dizziness, and Bell's palsy (when facial muscles temporarily droop on one side). There may also be severe joint pain and swelling, particularly affecting the knees; and neck stiffness due to meningitis. Untreated infections can lead to serious, debilitating, and chronic joint, heart, and neurological problems.

Those bitten by a tick who develop symptoms should immediately contact a physician. Oral antibiotics cure most cases.



A "bull's-eye" rash often accompanies Lyme disease. CDC photo.

The Division of Public Health (DPH) recommends taking these precautions (think "BLAST"):

- **B**athe or shower within two hours of coming inside.
- **L**ook for ticks and remove them from yourself, your children, and pets.
- **A**pply tick repellent (containing less than 50 percent DEET for adults and less than 30 percent DEET for children) to the skin. Do not use repellents with DEET on infants younger than two months old. Repellents with permethrin should be used on shoes and clothing only.



Adult female Black-legged or deer tick. The species transmits the Lyme disease bacterium. CDC photo.

- **S**afeguard your yard by keeping grass mowed and creating a three-foot or wider mulch or gravel barrier between lawns and woods. Use plantings that do not attract deer, the main food source for adult ticks.
- **T**reat dogs with a tick preventive product after consulting with a veterinarian.

For more information, visit

DPH at dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/epi/lyme.html and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html>.