

## Ask a Patient Health News March 6, 2022

### Health News: March 6, 2022

- The FDA's Office of Prescription Drug Promotion (OPDP) sent an enforcement letter to drugmaker Eli Lilly stating that an Instagram promotion called "10,080 Minutes" about its type 2 diabetes drug **Trulicity** (dulaglutide) failed to adequately present the drug's FDA-approved indication and limitations of use. For example, Lilly claimed in the ad that Trulicity may help 'lower A1C' in all patients, when this has not been demonstrated, according to the FDA.

This is not the first time Lilly has been warned about **misleading ads**: the OPDP provided comments to Eli Lilly in 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2019. OPDP writes that it is "concerned that Lilly is promoting Trulicity without presenting the benefits and serious risks of the drug in a truthful and non-misleading manner, despite concerns previously expressed by OPDP." Lilly told Endpts that they removed the Instagram post after receiving the FDA's letter.

<https://endpts.com/fda-slams-eli-lillys-misleading-instagram-ad-for-its-type-2-diabetes-injection/>

- Consumers should be aware that if they see a prescription drug advertisement on television, social media, website or search engine that they think is potentially misleading or does not reveal material facts about the product being promoted, they may report the "bad ad" to the FDA. Consumer submissions are often the only way that a **misleading promotion** will come to their attention. This page explains how to report a "bad ad:"

<https://www.fda.gov/drugs/office-prescription-drug-promotion/bad-ad-program>

### Research on Health Benefits of Physical Activity

- We all know that walking is good exercise, but how much should we walk, and should we be walking more or less as we get older? University of Mass. Amherst physical activity epidemiologist Amanda Paluch conducted a meta-analysis of 15 studies to find out what number of **daily walking steps** will optimally improve adults' health and longevity. She found that for **adults 60 and older**, the risk of premature death leveled off at about **6,000-8,000 steps per day**, meaning that more steps than that provided no additional benefit for longevity. For adults younger than 60, the optimal number of steps to aim for is about **8,000-10,000** steps per day. The study was published in the *Lancet*.

<https://www.umass.edu/news/article/meta-analysis-15-studies-reports-new-findings-how-many-daily-walking-steps-needed>

Height	Approximate Steps Per Mile
4'10"	2,645
4'11"	2,600
5'0"	2,556
5'1"	2,514
5'2"	2,474
5'3"	2,435
5'4"	2,397
5'5"	2,360
5'6"	2,324
5'7"	2,289
5'8"	2,256
5'9"	2,223
5'10"	2,191
5'11"	2,160
6'0"	2,130
6'1"	2,101
6'2"	2,073
6'3"	2,045
6'4"	2,018
6'5"	1,992

- Running or brisk walking is not the only way to reduce the risk of heart disease. Simply being "up and about" by performing routine activities, such as washing dishes, doing laundry, household cleaning, gardening, cooking and self-care activities like showering can significantly benefit cardiovascular health. University of California at San Diego researchers studied the impact of **daily life movement** to cardiovascular disease risk. Compared to women with less than two hours per day of daily life movement, those women with **at least four hours of daily life movement** had a 43% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, 43% lower risk of coronary heart disease, 30% lower risk of stroke and notably, a

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62% lower risk of cardiovascular disease death.

<https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/pressrelease/daily-activities-like-washing-dishes-reduced-heart-disease-risk-in-senior-women>



- The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) released its annual Allergy Capitals™ report for 2022, which identifies the most challenging cities for spring and fall allergies. Click for the full report on allergy scores for 100 U.S. cities.

<https://www.aafa.org/allergy-capitals/>



- President Biden proposed an overhaul of the **nursing home industry**, but it will be a complex task. For example, mandating adequate staffing levels for all 15,000 skilled nursing facilities without bankrupting those that can't afford far higher labor costs will be a challenge, since many of them can't hire and retain nurses and aides, a situation made worse by the pandemic.

A 2001 Center for Medicare Services (CMS) study suggested that optimal care required roughly one staffer for every seven short-stay patients and one staffer for every six long-stay residents, but many current nursing homes don't even meet that standard. A new CMS study has been ordered to investigate staffing levels as well as dig deeper into the finances of the industry, including nursing home chains and the role of private equity and real estate investment trusts in buying and selling facilities.

<https://khn.org/news/article/biden-nursing-home-overhaul-regulations-staffing/>

- After an elderly patient died suddenly during a routine test, scientists accidentally captured unique data on the **activity in his brain at the very end of his life**: During the 30 seconds before and after the man's heart stopped, his brain waves were remarkably similar to those seen during dreaming, memory recall and meditation, suggesting that people may actually see their life "flash before their eyes" when they die. This article about the study includes comments from readers, which include doctors, health care professionals, and even a scholar of Buddhism.

<https://www.livescience.com/first-ever-scan-of-dying-brain>

### Covid-19 News

- Because the CDC changed how it measures the risk of Covid-19 transmission in a community, more than **90% of people in the U.S. now live in an area with "low" or "medium" transmission levels**. In these areas, the CDC does not recommend mandating wearing a mask while indoors unless a person is immunocompromised or at "high risk" for severe Covid-19. In areas with "high" Covid-19 community levels, the CDC advises everyone to wear a mask in public indoor settings, including schools.

Why the change? Instead of only going by numbers of cases, which are dropping and are often asymptomatic, risk is determined by looking at this combination of factors: hospital beds being used by patients with COVID-19, new hospital admissions among people with COVID-19, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in a community. The map below is from March 4, 2022.

Check out the status of your county or city with this [CDC look-up form](#).

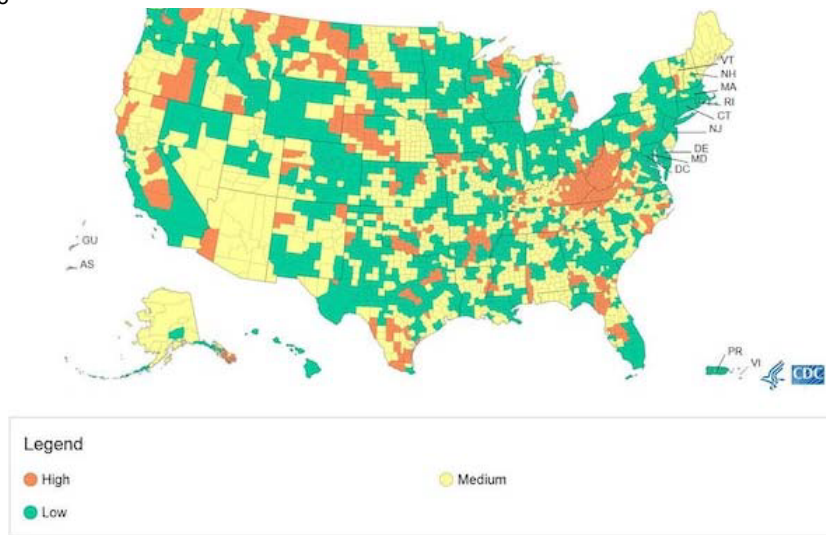
### U.S. COVID-19 Community Levels by County Map

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<https://www.askapatient.com/news/newsletter-archive/>

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### Covid 19: Treatments News

- President Biden announced a new "test to treat" program that would allow a person who receives a positive Covid test at a pharmacy to go home that day with one of two new medications: **Pfizer's Paxlovid** or **Merck's molnupiravir**. Both drugs have FDA emergency use authorization (EUA) for treating Covid-19 at home. However, doctors represented by the American Medical Association expressed concerns about the plan, because they don't think the medications are appropriate for some people and that the program oversimplifies challenging prescription decisions. The Biden administration countered that the program is mainly for the one-quarter of Americans that do not have a primary care doctor.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/bidens-test-treat-covid-plan-020721294.html>

- Paxlovid is a combination of Pfizer's investigational antiviral PF-07321332 and a low dose of ritonavir, an antiretroviral medication traditionally used to treat HIV. This is one of the drugs to be offered under the "test to treat" program.

- Before molnupiravir received its EUA, Public Citizen's Michael Carome expressed his concern about it. He argued its efficacy appeared to be modest, and said certain groups should be ineligible to receive molnupiravir, including all or most fully vaccinated individuals. Given molnupiravir's potential risk of embryo-fetal toxicity, Carome recommended verifications that individuals of childbearing potential be verified not to be pregnant throughout treatment. Now that it is authorized, the drug does have a boxed warning not to use in pregnant patients, but the label does not mention that vaccinated people should not use it.

<https://www.drugdiscoverytrends.com/why-public-citizen-is-skeptical-about-the-covid-19-antiviral-molnupiravir/>

- In an opinion column published in *BMJ*, a McGill University doctor called the molnupiravir authorization premature. The World Health Organization acknowledges that there is little safety data on it, and [recommended](#) that molnupiravir should be provided only to non-severe COVID-19 patients with the highest risk of hospitalization.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj.o44>

- The low-dose version of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine appears to be much less effective at protecting younger children against infection than the version of the vaccine given to older children and adults, according to a new study in preprint by the New York State Department of Health. Some experts suggest that the **wrong dose strength** was chosen for children age 5 to 11, who receive only a third (10mg) of the dose received by people age 12 to adult.

<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/28/1083617811/pfizer-vaccine-protection-kids>

- The CDC reports that among kids aged 12–17 years, the frequency of reactions after a Pfizer booster dose was equal to or just slightly higher than after the second primary dose. **Myocarditis** was **less frequently** reported after a booster dose than a second primary dose. Local injection site reactions (like arm pain and swelling) were more commonly reported after booster dose (82.0%) than dose 2 (77.8%) and systemic reactions were about the same for the booster dose and dose 2. Data is based on information reported to the CDC's V-safe monitoring system between December 2021- February 2022.

[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7109e2.htm?s\\_cid=mm7109e2\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7109e2.htm?s_cid=mm7109e2_w)

- Scientists are looking into why some people have strong resistance to Covid-19 and don't catch it even while living in the same household or room with an infected person. Sweden has had smaller rates of infections than other countries. Sweden's Karolinska Institute's recent study (in preprint and not yet peer-reviewed), suggests that immune responses triggered by **H1N1 influenza**, which was responsible for the 2009-10 swine flu pandemic – and possibly related subsequent strains, along with strains in some more **recent flu vaccines**, may equip people with partial protection against Covid-19.

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.12.23.21268321v1.full.pdf>

### Covid Statistics

- In the U.S., cases decreased by 28% and deaths by 8.9% compared to a week ago, with an average of 53,000 daily cases.

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker>

- Based on the latest data from the Nationwide Blood Donor Seroprevalence Survey (December 2021), the CDC estimates that **28.8% of the U.S. population have antibodies due to infection** with SARS-CoV-2 and **94.7% have antibodies from combined infection/vaccination**. But the CDC's Commercial Laboratories Seroprevalence Survey data, which goes through **January 2022**, suggests that **43.3% of the U.S. population have antibodies from infection with SARS-CoV-2**. The CDC does not comment on the difference in estimates from the two surveys, but most likely it is due to the Omicron surge during December 2021 and January 2022.

1. [Nationwide Blood Donor Seroprevalence Survey](#)

2. [Commercial Laboratories Seroprevalence Survey](#)

### Global Statistics

Worldwide, during the week of 21 through 27 February 2022, the number of new COVID-19 cases and deaths continued to decline by 16% and 10% respectively, as compared to the previous week. Globally, over 10 million new cases and over 60 000 new deaths were reported. At the regional level, the Western Pacific Region reported a 32% increase in the number of new weekly cases while all other regions reported decreases.

<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update-on-covid-19---1-march-2022>

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