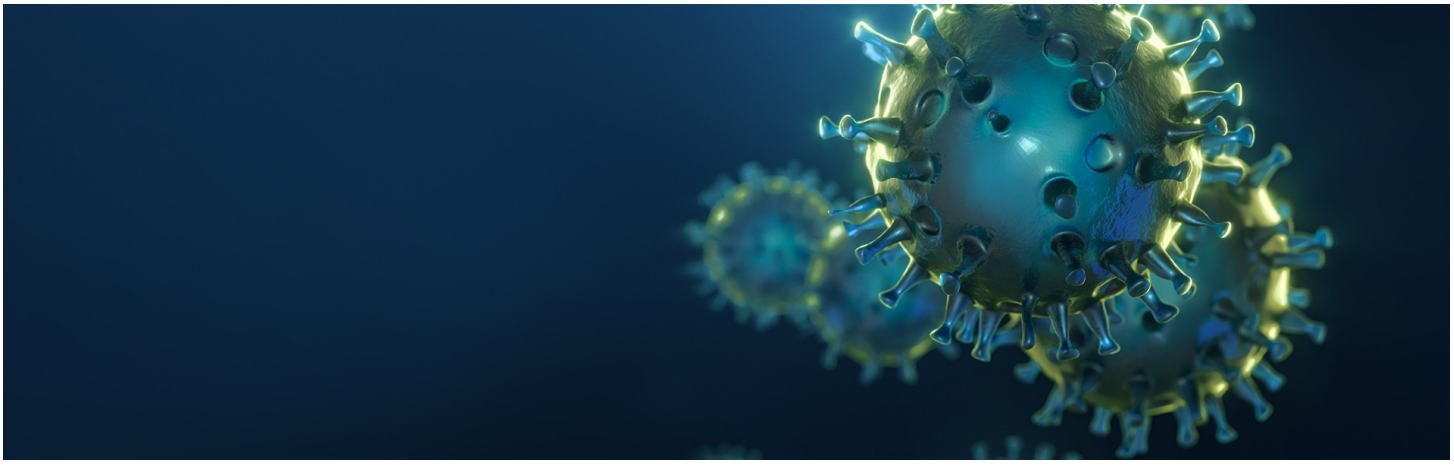
COVID-19 Update: Record-Breaking Hospitalizations, $1.3 Billion for Ohio Businesses, Spread from Social Gatherings

October 20, 2020

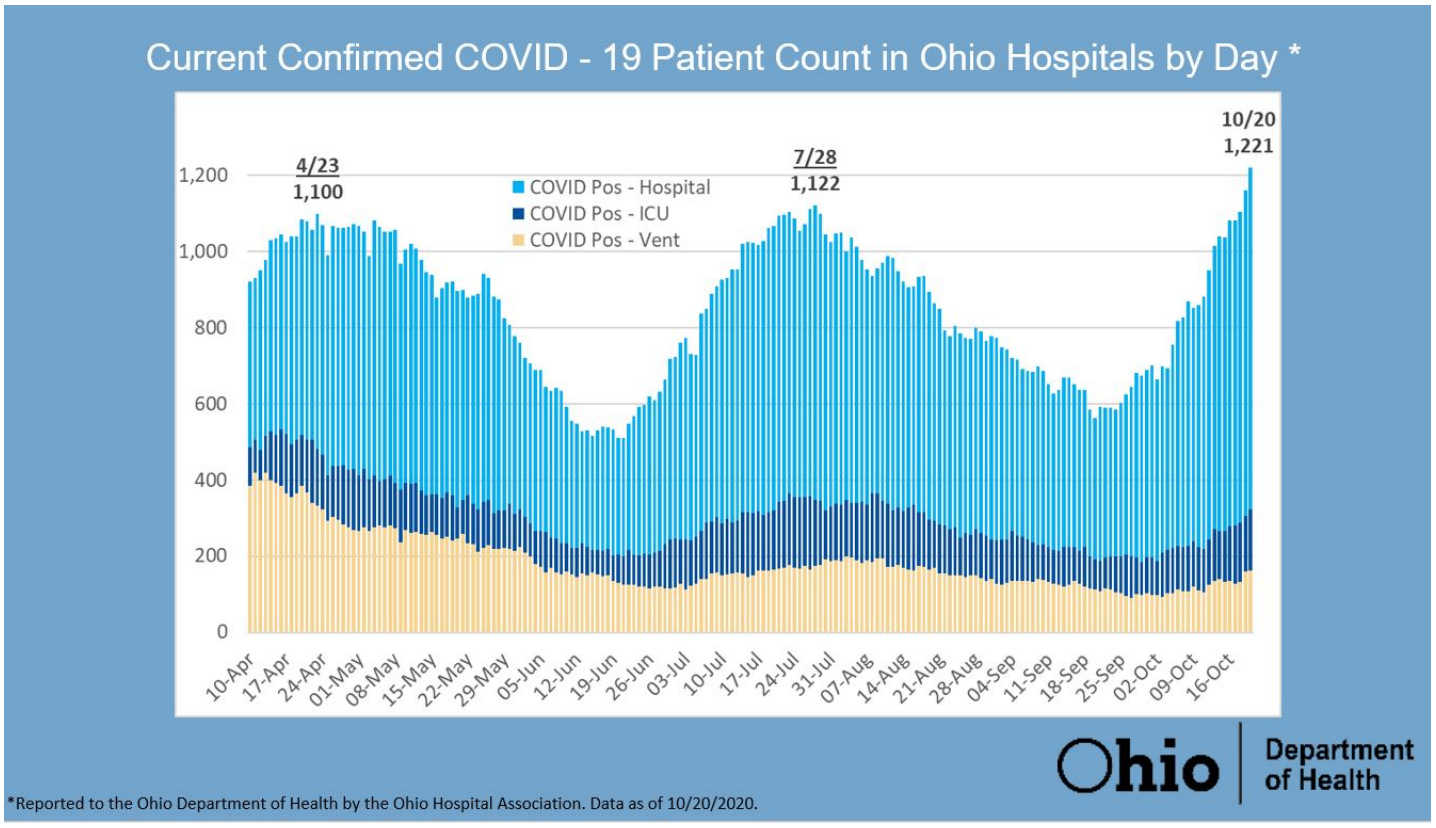


(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

RECORD-BREAKING HOSPITALIZATIONS

Governor DeWine announced today that hospitals across Ohio are currently treating 1,221 COVID-19 patients which is the most hospitalized patients at one time since the start of the pandemic. A total of 216 of these hospitalizations were reported in the past 24 hours which is the highest number of hospitalizations reported in a single day and more than 50 hospitalizations more than the previous high in mid-July.

Ohio is also recording an increase in ICU admissions and ventilator utilization.



"So far, Ohio's hospitals still have adequate remaining capacity to care for everyone who is sick, but our hospitalizations are already breaking records, and we are not seeing any signs of Ohio's case numbers slowing down," said Governor DeWine. "If we don't buckle down, wear our masks, and take care of each other, I am very concerned that our hospitals will begin to fill up. We pushed this virus down before, and it's up to all of us to do it again."

Ohio also reported 2,015 new COVID-19 cases since yesterday.
Sixty-nine of Ohio's 88 counties have a high incidence of COVID-19 spread, meaning their rate of cases is more than 100 cases per 100,000 population in the past two weeks.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS

The White House Coronavirus Task Force strongly recommends that Ohioans limit gatherings with family and friends to prevent the virus from spreading to those most at risk of complications. The recommendation follows the increase in community spread in Ohio initiated by small social gatherings.

"It's the same thing I'm hearing when I speak with county health commissioners. They are seeing the most spread in Ohio from informal gatherings," said Governor DeWine. "We can't let our guard down; we must keep our masks on."

Governor DeWine also urged caution for sports fans who gather this weekend to watch the Ohio State, Browns, and Bengals football games.

$1.3 BILLION GOING TO OHIO BUSINESSES

Dividend checks from the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation will be mailed to employers beginning this week. The dividend amount totals approximately $1.3 billion.

The money is being given back to employers in response to Governor DeWine's request in August that the Ohio BWC Board of Directors approve a second dividend to provide financial support for public and private employers impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

These checks will be mailed to employers throughout the end of October.

A wide-ranging program to address the needs of struggling Ohioans, including funding for rent, mortgages, and water and sewer utility bills, as well as funding for small businesses and nonprofits, will be announced in the near future.

OHSAA UPDATE

Lt. Governor Jon Husted provided an update from the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) on the status of high school fall sports.

OHSAA Observers have attended 458 sites, including 600 football games, at least 50 volleyball matches, and at least 50 soccer matches over the course of eight weeks.

The OHSAA provides reports to the schools following the competitions to serve as an educational opportunity for the school to improve.

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY DASHBOARD

Ohio's new long-term care facility dashboard is now available at coronavirus.ohio.gov. The new dashboard outlines visitation information at nursing facilities across the state. Those with loved ones in a nursing facility can search for information by county or facility to find information on the types of visits that are offered and when they are permitted. Nursing facilities were permitted to allow indoor visitations beginning October 12.

Details regarding the visitation guidelines for Ohio's intermediate care facilities can be found in a public health order issued on September 24. Visitation at intermediate care facilities was permitted to resume on September 28.

VACCINE PROVIDER REGISTRATION

Governor DeWine announced that Ohio has submitted its Interim Draft COVID-19 Vaccine Plan to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The plan is a framework on how Ohio will proceed once a vaccine is available. The plan will be available tomorrow at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

The Ohio Department of Health will also be launching a new registration tool for health care providers who would like to eventually administer the COVID-19 vaccine. Providers, such as local health departments, hospitals, pharmacies, and nursing facilities, will be notified soon with instructions about how they can register.

TEST RESULT REPORTING

The Ohio Department of Health has developed a technology solution to allow their systems to track negative test results. In response, Interim Director of Health Lance Himes today amended a directive that now requires all labs to start sharing all positive, negative, inconclusive, and invalid test results related to COVID-19 tests with the Ohio Department of Health.

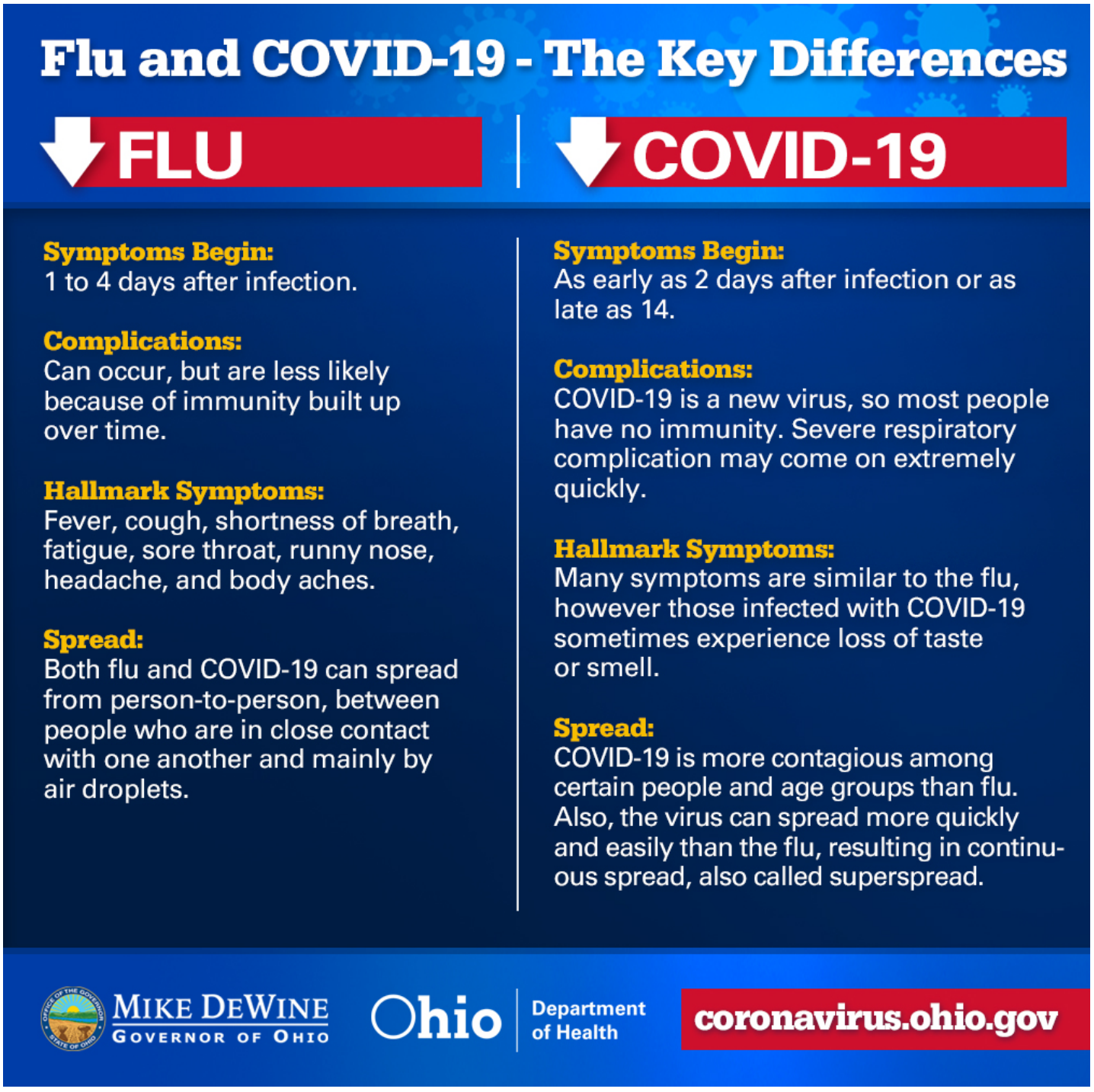
Previously, labs were reporting positive COVID-19 results at the individual level and as an aggregate count for all other test results.

"Adding these categories will allow us to gather additional data for a more complete picture of how COVID is spreading in our communities," said Governor DeWine. This will also allow us to provide positivity data by county in the coming weeks."

FLU SHOTS

Governor DeWine once again urged Ohio citizens to get their flu shots this year. A person can become infected with both the flu virus and coronavirus at the same time.

If you become ill this season, many healthcare providers will test for both flu and COVID-19 to get a proper diagnosis. While the symptoms can be similar, COVID-19 is more serious, its symptoms last longer, those hospitalized tend to have longer hospital stays, and the virus has a higher mortality rate.



CURRENT COVID-19 DATA

There are 185,639 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 5,083 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 17,388 people have been hospitalized, including 3,597 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language translation, can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's YouTube page.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.

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