

COVID-19 Vaccines

A TCU Toolkit



Background

In late 2019, COVID-19 spread rapidly across the globe, disrupting daily life and overwhelming healthcare systems. The virus led to millions of hospitalizations and claimed over a million lives. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency on January 30, 2020, marking a key step to tackling the outbreak and protecting people's health. Governments worldwide implemented lockdowns, travel restrictions, and social distancing guidelines, to slow the virus's spread.

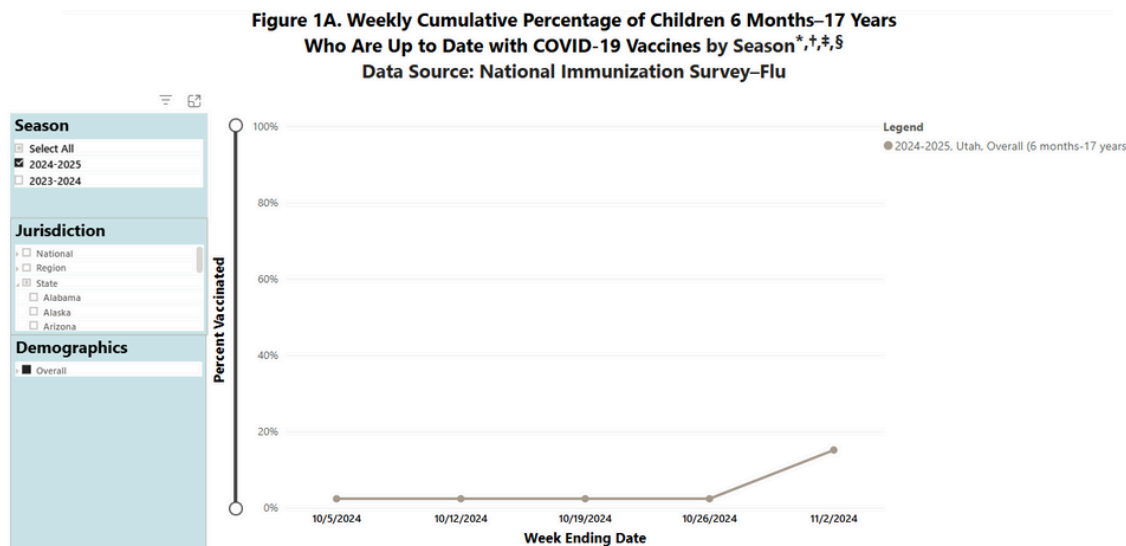
Scientists and public health professionals worked tirelessly to understand the virus and develop effective treatments and vaccines. By the end of 2020, several vaccines had received emergency use authorization, leading to the establishment of mass vaccination sites across the country in 2021. In addition to traditional vaccination locations, innovative strategies were implemented, including mobile units, pop-up clinics, drive-through services, and large public venues, all designed to make the vaccine easily accessible and encourage widespread participation.

Fast forward to 2024, where the virus has mutated and new strains have emerged, making it essential for people to be informed, identify their symptoms, follow updated safety guidelines, and stay up to date with vaccinations recommended by healthcare providers. However, amidst political change that has seemingly led to growing distrust in public health guidance, concerns about vaccine safety, combined with pandemic fatigue, have made it increasingly difficult to encourage people to get the updated vaccine. Misinformation and a general sense of exhaustion of the topic have complicated efforts to address this ongoing health issue.

By staying informed and empowering trusted messengers—such as community leaders, healthcare providers, and educators—with clear and accurate information, we can protect our families, neighbors, classmates, coworkers, and friends from illness. Addressing concerns about vaccine safety and promoting vaccination through education are key to increasing uptake. The following resources have been created to support community-based organizations (CBOs) in facilitating informed discussions about COVID-19 vaccines, while also providing valuable information to anyone seeking it. This toolkit is designed to equip both CBOs and individuals with the necessary resources to access accurate healthcare information. By empowering individuals with knowledge, we hope they will become trusted messengers, encouraging informed decisions for better health outcomes in their own communities.

Data

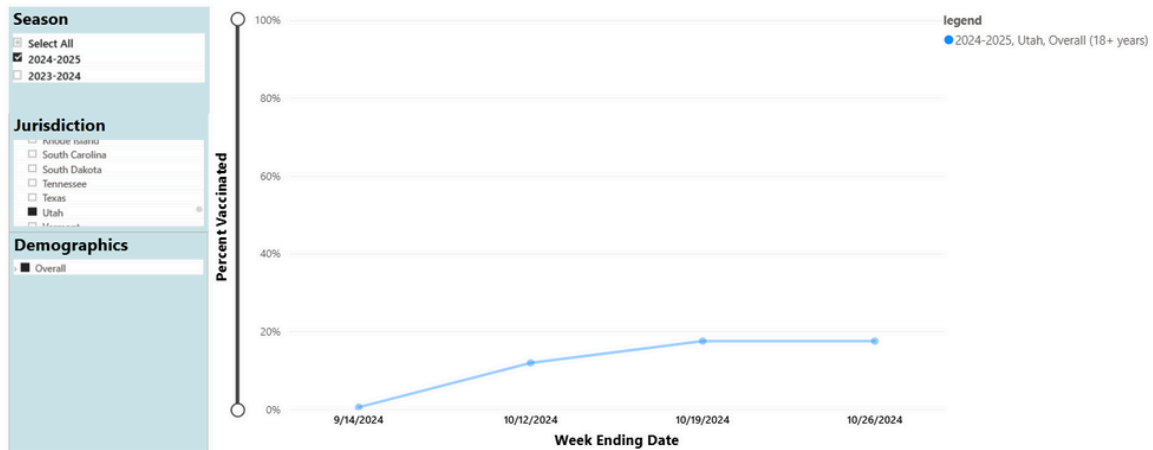
Data in Figure 1A, from the National Immunization Survey, shows the percentage of children aged 6 months - 17 Years who are up to date with the 2024-2025 COVID-19 Vaccine. The survey shows that about 15% of Utah children have received their 2024-2025 COVID-19 Vaccine.



Meanwhile, Figure 3A looks at the percentage of adults 18 Years and Older who receive the updated vaccine. At the end of October 2024, 17.5% of Utah Adults received the 2024-2025 COVID-19 Vaccine.

Figure 3A. COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage, Overall and by Selected Demographics and Jurisdiction, Among Adults 18 Years and Older, 2023–24 Through 2024–25^{a,†,*,§}

Data Source: National Immunization Survey–Adult COVID Module



Key Publications

Did you know that the World Health Organization (WHO) named vaccine hesitancy one of the top ten threats to global health in 2019?

- **Review: [Vaccine Myth-Buster - Cleaning Up with Prejudices and Dangerous Misinformation](#)**
 - “This review targets five topics concerning vaccines and reviews current scientific publications in order to summarize the available information refuting conspiracy theories and myths about vaccination. The topics have been selected based on the author’s personal perception of the most frequently occurring safety controversies: the inactivation agent formaldehyde, the adjuvant aluminum, the preservative mercury, the mistakenly-drawn correlation between vaccines and autism and genetic vaccines” (Löffler, 2021).
 - “The vastly spreading misinformation concerning vaccine safety poses a threat especially to children’s lives worldwide” (Löffler, 2021).
 - “Noted deficits regarding scientific communication are of high concern. Most publications are not easy to understand, especially for people without scientific knowledge” (Löffler, 2021).

Community-based organizations (CBOs) can have a powerful impact on increasing vaccine uptake by serving as trusted and knowledgeable sources of information. Trusted messengers are vital in empowering community members to make informed healthcare choices and help to foster a sense of confidence and community support in the vaccination process.

- **Trusted messengers and trusted messages: [The role for community-based organizations in promoting COVID-19 and routine immunizations](#)**
 - "The relationship between public health and the community, modulated by trusted CBOs can be powerful in improving the lives and experiences of residents while strengthening the trust between public health and communities that may have suffered because of the fragmented and challenging response to the pandemic" (Shen et al., 2023).

Current Recommendations:

- **[COVID-19 Immunization Schedule](#)**
- **[Guarding Against COVID-19](#)**

Vaccine Safety:

- **[What goes into a vaccine?](#)**
- **[How the COVID-19 vaccines were created so quickly.](#)**
- **[COVID-19 Vaccination Myth Busters](#)**
- **[Are Vaccines Safe for My Baby? Answers from Trusted Nurses](#)**

Talking About COVID-19 Vaccines:

- **[COVID-19 Boosters Frequently Asked Questions](#)**
- **[Talking to People About Vaccinations - Dos and Don'ts](#)**
- **[How to Start a Conversation & How to Disengage](#)**

Finding Vaccines:

- **Vaccines are available at healthcare provider offices, pharmacies, local health departments, and community health centers.**
 - Community vaccine clinics may also be held at worksites, schools, health clinics, and other locations.
 - Look for [Community Health Clinics in Your Area](#)
 - [Call or Visit Your Local Health Department](#)
- **Visit Vaccines.gov**
 - Vaccines.gov helps you find pharmacies and their contact information. You can schedule your appointment directly with the pharmacy you choose.

- **Call the COVID-19 Hotline: 1-800-232-0233**
 - Help is available in English, Spanish, and many other languages
- **Work with a Take Care Utah Health Access Assister**
 - Ask for help scheduling an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine
 - Visit takecareutah.org/bookings or call 801 433 2299

Paying for the COVID-19 Vaccine:

- **Most private health insurance plans cover the cost of COVID-19 vaccination**
- **Utah Medicaid & CHIP will cover the cost of immunizations, with no co-pay!**
- **Medicare beneficiaries can access COVID-19 vaccines at no cost**
- **Any plan available through the Health Insurance Marketplace will cover immunizations as an essential health benefit**
- **Some children may qualify for the Vaccines for Children program**
 - Provides uninsured or underinsured children with no cost or low-cost vaccines from birth through age 17

Citations:

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doi:10.3389/fimmu.2021.663280. PMID: 34177902; PMCID: PMC8222972.

Sadtler, Kaitlyn, and Elizabeth Wayne. "How the COVID-19 Vaccines Were Created So Quickly." TED, https://www.ted.com/talks/kaitlyn_sadtler_and_elizabeth_wayne_how_the_covid_19_vaccines_were_created_so_quickly/transcript?subtitle=en&language=es.

Shen, Angela K., et al. "Trusted Messengers and Trusted Messages: The Role for Community-Based Organizations in Promoting COVID-19 and Routine Immunizations." *Vaccine*, vol. 41, no. 12, 2023, pp. 1994-2002. doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2023.02.045.

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