

## Highland Lakes Leaders

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

July 22, 2021

### Pandemic of the Unvaccinated? Mostly....

As of 7/18 reporting by TDSHS there are 196 active COVID-19 cases in Blanco, Burnet, Gillespie, Llano, Mason, and San Saba Counties. However, this chart understates things. 84 more cases were reported in the last three days. Ten more people have died since early June from COVID-19 as the primary reason.

Most current through 7/18 TDSHS website.

County	*Number Tested	*7/13	*7/18	Last new case	**Active Cases	**Recovered
Blanco	8,060	644	648↑	7/17	13	753
Burnet	47,343	4,373	4,421↑	7/17	103	4,838
Gillespie	22,101	1,823	1,838↑	7/17	37	2,563
Llano	15,153	1,226	1,239↑	7/137	36	1,653
Mason	2,857	246	245	6/05	4	417
San Saba	6,057	520	521↑	7/17	3	762
<b>TOTAL</b>	101,571	<b>*8,832</b>	<b>*8,912</b>		<b>**196↑</b>	<b>**11,182↑</b>

### Who's hospitalized now?

First, what you read and hear is real. More and more patients are being hospitalized from COVID. This is particularly disheartening to the Last-Line-of-Defense Hospital Physician and Nursing teams who made it through the winter and know this surge is completely avoidable. Complicating matters more, tertiary /specialty hospitals are admitting growing numbers of COVID patients. These centers are them not able to take transfers of the sickest patients from around the Region. The healthcare “patient supply chain” is clogged.

Comparing last January's hospitalized patients to the last four weeks, it is the same population. 97% are over the age 50. One half of the rest are under 75; one half are over 75. It is still our Seniors.

Unvaccinated Seniors. The latest DSHS data shows that 5,750 Seniors have not received any vaccine and 1,728 have received just one dose.

Unvaccinated Citizens Over 65	At Great Risk	At Some Risk
Blanco	531	181
Burnet	1,918	981
Llano	2,626	489
San Saba	675	77
	5,750	1,728

Context: What is happening in the US? *				
Total Doses Delivered	Doses Administered	People Vaccinated at least 1 dose	People Fully Vaccinated	% of USA Population Fully Vaccinated
399,437,980	352,278,040	188,825,583	150,658,153	45.5%

**Vaccinations**

Vaccination continues in our area at a slower pace. As of 7/22/2021, 44% of the 12+ population is fully vaccinated.

**What are the risks in the Highland Lakes?**

We are most concerned about the rising infection rates and how the infections are being passed between family and friends. Vaccinated people may get the Delta variant and have no symptoms and be a spreader to others. State data shows that of all confirmed patients, on average, they spread the disease to 1.24 others. Seniors are getting the disease from their friends and family members and some requiring hospitalization, some dying. Another concern is that when schools reopen in August, without masking requirements, unvaccinated students are likely to spread COVID within their classrooms and their social circles and families. Testing, quarantining and temporary closure may all complicate education this fall.

**How Safe are Vaccines?**

So far over 399 million doses have been given. We’ve all heard news reports of myocarditis, vascular bleeds, and Guillain-Barre syndrome. The counts of those issues have been in 10’s or hundreds. Even if they were as many as 100,000 real complications the portion of real complications is 0.000025, or 0.0025%. Without question the vaccines are some of the safest treatments ever created.

**Vaccine Landscape**

No changes this week in the various vaccine company approvals or specifications. We are anxiously awaiting FDA full approval of the vaccines.

**What’s Next?**

Let us agree to save as many lives as possible. If anyone receiving this message. or your designee, would like to work on a project to overcome vaccine hesitancy, or know if such a local project, let’s connect and build a communications plan. I’ll be working on a “what we know so far” fact sheet for use in communicating with key groups.

**Fact and Myth Resources.**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines-myth-versus-fact>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484859>

<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/736/the-herd>

Another fascinating listen, or read, is the “This American Life” podcast episode called the “Herd”. In act III, Republican Pollster Frank Lutz holds a focus group of 20 conservative, non-vaccinated, individuals. He explores their reasoning and brings several experts to appeal to them over a 2.5-hour span (The episode is 25 minutes). Spoiler alert, when presented with factual, information from trusted sources, most change their minds.