

Recent increase seen in COVID-19-linked hospitalization for teens

June 8 2021



COVID-19-associated hospitalization rates increased recently for

adolescents, and a considerable proportion of those hospitalized were admitted to the intensive care unit, according to research published in the June 4 early-release issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Fiona P. Havers, M.D., from the CDC COVID-19 Response Team, and colleagues describe the epidemiology of COVID-19-associated hospitalizations in adolescents and compare it to [adolescent](#) hospitalizations associated with other vaccine-preventable respiratory viruses. COVID-19-associated hospitalizations were examined among adolescents aged 12 to 17 years, including demographic characteristics of those admitted during Jan. 1 to March 31, 2021, and hospitalization rates during March 1, 2020, to April 24, 2021.

The researchers found that 31.4 percent of the 204 adolescents who were likely hospitalized primarily for COVID-19 during Jan. 1 to March 31, 2021, were admitted to an [intensive care unit](#), and 4.9 percent required invasive mechanical ventilation; no associated deaths were observed. Weekly adolescent hospitalization rates peaked at 2.1 per 100,000 in early January 2021, then declined to 0.6 in mid-March and increased to 1.3 in April. During Oct. 1, 2020, to April 24, 2021, cumulative COVID-19-associated hospitalization rates were 2.5 to 3.0 times higher than influenza-associated [hospitalization rates](#) from three recent influenza seasons.

"Expansion of COVID-19 vaccination of adolescents, with particular attention to racial and ethnic minority groups disproportionately affected by severe COVID-19, is expected to reduce COVID-19-associated morbidity within this age group," the authors write.

"I am deeply concerned by the numbers of hospitalized adolescents and saddened to see the number of adolescents who required treatment in intensive care units or mechanical ventilation," CDC Director Rochelle

P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement. "Much of this suffering can be prevented. ... Vaccination is our way out of this pandemic. I continue to see promising signs in CDC data that we are nearing the end of this pandemic in this country; however, we all have to do our part and get vaccinated to cross the finish line."

Two authors disclosed financial ties to the biopharmaceutical industry, including companies that manufacture COVID-19 vaccines; one author has received funding to conduct clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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