UNMASK THE FACTS

November 15 – November 28

November 26, 2021

WHO classifies Omicron as a new variant of concern

The World Health Organization classified the SARS-CoV-2 variant "Omicron" (pronounced AH-muh-kraan) as a variant of concern. This variant contains about 50 mutations though researchers won't know for several more days if these mutations contribute to increased transmissibility, virulence, or vaccine resistance. Omicron, also known as the B.1.1.529 variant, was first reported to WHO from South Africa on November 25. As of today, the variant has been detected in at least 20 countries, including the United States.

READ MORE >

November 21, 2021

CDC expands eligibility for COVID-19 booster shots

The CDC expanded the eligibility for who may and should get a COVID-19 booster shot. All adults 18 years and older who received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine may get a booster shot at least six months after their second dose. All adults 50 years and older and all adults 18 years and older who live in long-term care settings should get a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose at least six months after their second dose. All recipients of the J&J COVID-19 vaccine should get a booster shot at least two months after their initial dose. CDC allows a mix-and-match approach to booster shots.

READ MORE >

November 17, 2021

CDC issues EUI for the use of Pfizer vaccine in those inoculated with non-FDA authorized vaccines

The CDC issued updated EUI (Emergency Use Instructions) for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. This vaccine can be given as an additional primary dose or booster dose to people who completed a vaccine primary series with certain non-FDA authorized COVID-19 such as AstraZeneca, Novavax, and Sinopharm, among others. The new EUI aim to increase protection among those who were vaccinated outside of the U.S. or who received certain non-FDA authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines through participation in clinical trials.

READ MORE >

November 26, 2021

An FDA panel endorses the Merck antiviral pill, but some panelists flag concerns about potential side effects

The FDA says that Merck's COVID-19 pill is effective at reducing serious COVID-19 outcomes, but some are concerned about the possible risks of birth defects and other pregnancy-related problems. An FDA advisory panel met on 11/30 and voted 13-10 to endorse the pill from Merck for high-risk adults, thereby recommending that the government, for the first time, authorize an antiviral pill to combat the most severe effects of COVID-19. Members who voted against this recommendation requested more research into its possible side effects.

READ MORE >

November 19, 2021

Number of COVID-19 cases increase during the weeks before Thanksgiving

Last week, the United States was averaging about 95,000 new COVID-19 cases a day, which represents an increase of about 25% over two weeks. This uptick has been mostly attributed to rising caseloads in the Upper Midwest and Northeast. Reports of new cases are up more than 80% in Massachusetts and up more than 70% in Illinois. National statistics show a decrease in caseloads since Thanksgiving; however, this is likely a result of holiday reporting practices and might not be representative of real-world trends.

READ MORE >

americares

Americares is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing health programs, medicine, medical supplies and emergency aid.

Disclaimer: This project was funded in whole by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grant number NU50CK000588. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this resource center do not necessarily represent the policy of CDC or HHS and should not be considered an endorsement by the Federal Government.