

Yakima County COVID-19 Trends Report

January 2023 - March 2023 (Quarter 1)

Overview

The Yakima Health District is publishing this report quarterly to provide more information on current trends in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in Yakima County. This report also includes data on COVID-19 breakthrough cases. The data referenced in this report comes from the Yakima Health District's internal database, the Washington Disease Reporting System (WDRS), and the Washington Immunization Information Systems (WAIS). Note that the data on this report is preliminary and may change based on additional reporting.

Considerations for COVID-19 Data by Vaccination Status

While fully vaccinated individuals may still become infected with COVID-19, multiple factors determine the proportion of COVID-19 cases among fully vaccinated persons:

- **Breakthrough infections are expected to occur as more individuals become vaccinated**
 - When a larger proportion of the population is fully vaccinated, the expected proportion of cases among fully vaccinated individuals is also larger.
- **New COVID-19 variants may affect the proportion of breakthrough infections**
 - Omicron is currently the dominant COVID-19 variant in Washington state and has been found to spread more easily than earlier variants, including the Delta variant.
- **COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses, continue to prevent severe illness, hospitalization and death.**
 - Compared to people who are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations, unvaccinated people are more likely to get COVID-19, much more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19, and much more likely to die from COVID-19.
- **Waning immunity may occur over time**
 - Waning immunity from the vaccine may occur due to the combination of decreasing protection as time passes since getting vaccinated, as well as the greater infectiousness of COVID-19 variants.



For additional COVID-19 data, visit:

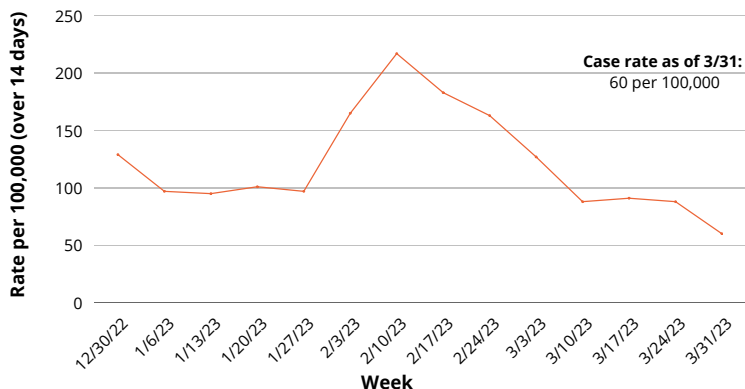
www.yakimacounty.us/2404/Data-Summary

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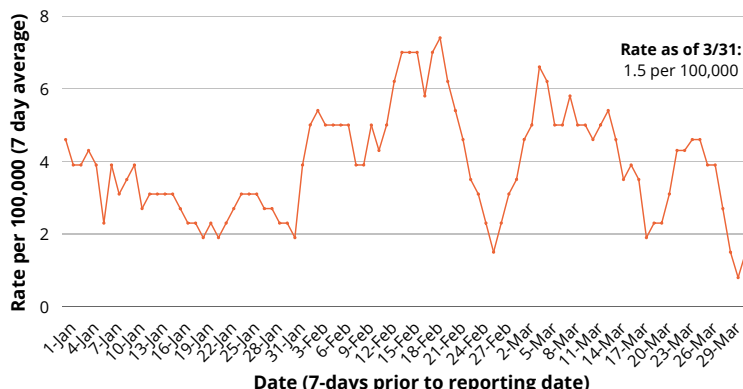
COVID-19 Cases

COVID-19 case rate by week, December 30, 2022 - March 31, 2023



COVID-19 Hospitalizations

COVID-19 Hospitalization rate, 7-day average for past month, January 1, 2023 - March 31, 2023



Key Observations

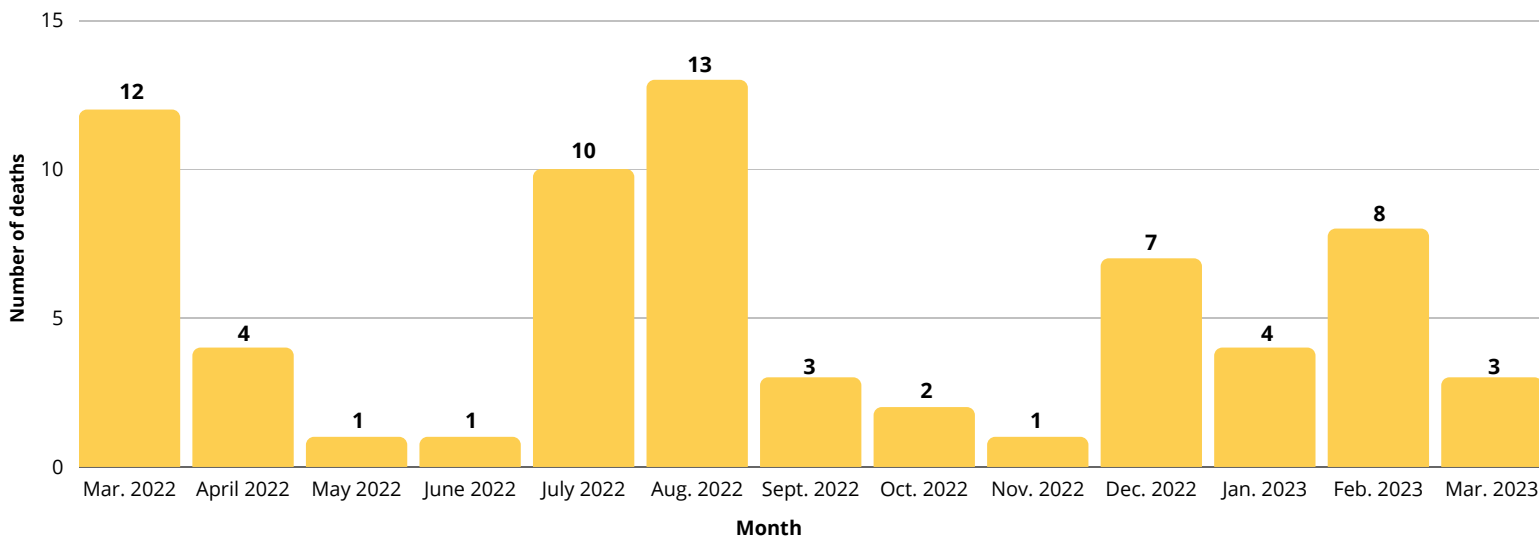
In the first Quarter of 2023, a high daily case rate was seen on 2/10, with 560 cases reported over the span of 14 days, resulting in a case rate of 205 per 100,000 residents. Since that high count on 2/10, COVID-19 daily case counts in Yakima County began to decrease. The 14-day case rate for March 31st was 60 cases per 100,000. Cases may be undercounted due to unreported results from at-home test kits. Currently, the CDC rates Yakima County at a low COVID19 community level. Omicron subvariants (XBB.1.5.1, BQ.1.1) are the most dominant variants in the state based on surveillance.

Key Observations

Yakima County experienced an increase of COVID-19 hospitalizations in the month of February. The hospitalization rate began to decrease after 2/19 and increased again on 2/26. As of March 31st, the 7-day hospitalization rate for Yakima County was 1.5 hospitalizations per 100,000 residents, compared to the previous hospitalization rate of 4.6 reported on January 1st. In Quarter 1 of 2023, there have been a total of 126 hospitalizations reported, with 74 of these occurring in individuals ages 65 and older.

COVID-19 Deaths

Figure 3. Total COVID-19 deaths by month, March 2022 - March 2023



Key Observations

COVID-19 deaths decreased to 3 in March after seeing an increase in February. There have been a total of 15 deaths in 2023 so far with seven deaths being in the 35-48 age group and eight of them in the 50-64 age group. The overall number of COVID-19 deaths in Yakima County is 768.

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COVID-19 Breakthrough Cases

Figure 4. COVID-19 cases by vaccination status, January 2023 - March 2023

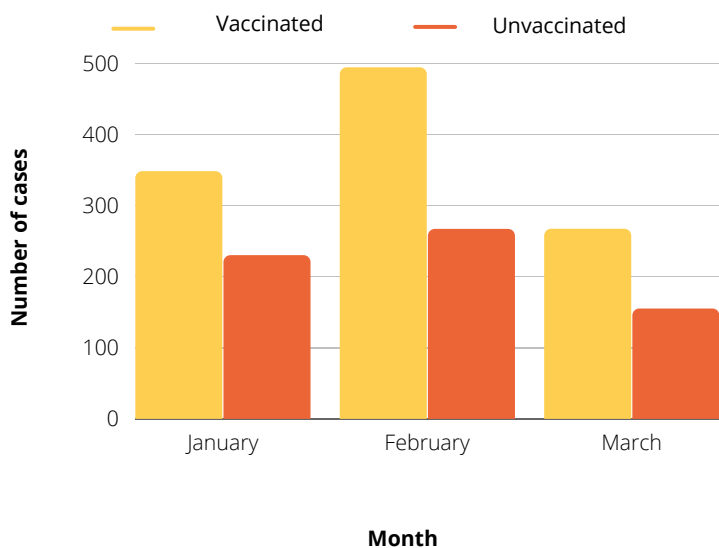


Table 1. COVID-19 cases by vaccination status, January 2023 - March 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	348 (60%)	230 (40%)	578 (100%)
February	494 (65%)	267 (35%)	761 (100%)
March	267 (63%)	155 (37%)	422(100%)

Key Observations

There has been an decrease in the total number of cases over the last month, with a 57% decrease of cases from February to March. Of the 422 cases in March, 267 (63%) were vaccinated and 155 (37%) were unvaccinated. With the continuation of COVID-19 cases, everyone is recommended to stay up-to-date on their COVID-19 vaccinations and get tested for COVID-19 if symptomatic. Additionally, it is recommended to utilize additional prevention measures such as hand-washing, wearing a mask in crowded or poorly ventilated areas, and staying home when sick to stay protected against COVID-19 infection.

COVID-19 Hospitalizations by Vaccination Status

Figure 5. COVID-19 Hospitalizations by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - March 2023

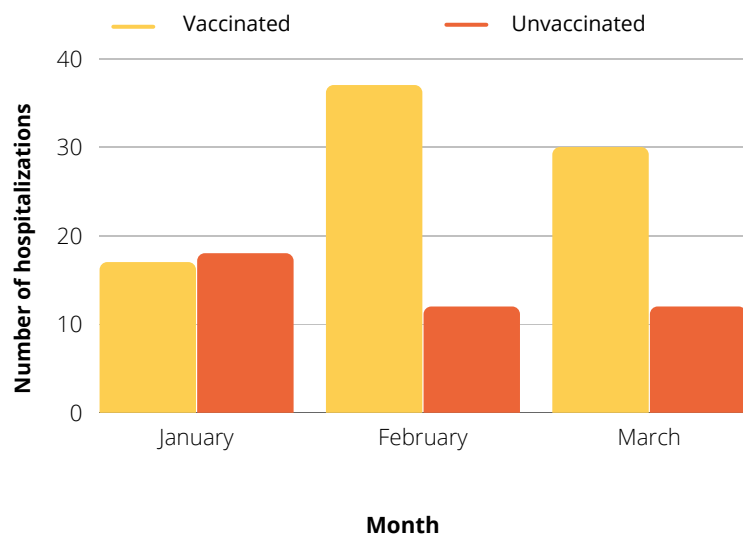


Table 2. COVID-19 Hospitalizations by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - March 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	17 (49%)	18 (51%)	35 (100%)
February	37 (76%)	12 (24%)	49 (100%)
March	30 (71%)	12 (29%)	42 (100%)

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COVID-19 Deaths by Vaccination Status

Figure 6. COVID-19 Deaths by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - March 2023

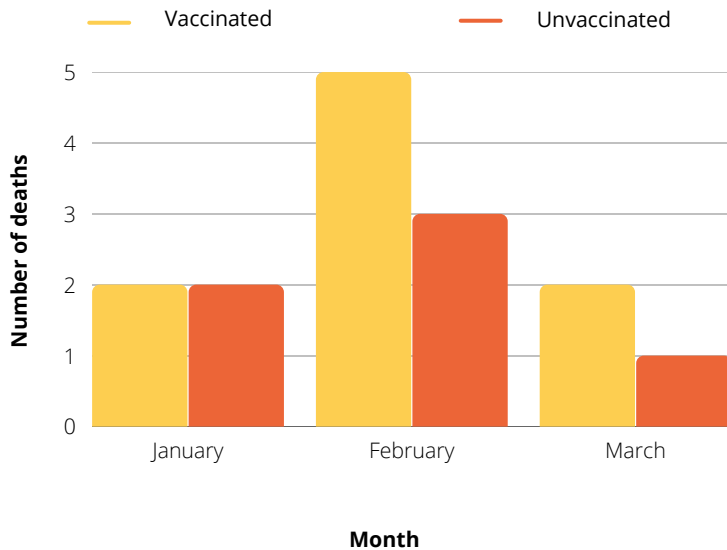


Table 3. COVID-19 Deaths by COVID-19 Vaccination Status, January 2023 - March 2023

Month	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated	Total
January	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
February	5 (63%)	3 (38%)	8 (100%)
March	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)

Key Observations

There was a decrease in COVID-19 hospitalization and deaths in March. The total COVID-19 hospitalizations decreased by 15% and the total COVID-19 death decreased by 91% from February to March. Out of the total of 15 deaths so far in 2023, seven were age 35-49 and eight were age 50-64. Hospitalization and cases by vaccination status provides a glimpse based on the count of the proportion of cases and hospitalizations that are being hospitalized but should not be interpreted as an adequate comparison of efficacy of vaccinations. Multiple factors influence whether infection occurs, and severe disease develops, including general health status, waning immunity from vaccine and from natural infection, as well as current variant in circulation. The updated bivalent booster is available for individuals ages 6 months and up and can be received two months after the last COVID-19 vaccine dose. The bivalent booster protects against the original COVID-19 virus as well as the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 variants. According to data from the Washington State Department of Health, only about 20% of eligible individuals in Yakima County have received a bivalent booster dose. Visit YakimaVaccines.org for information on where to find COVID-19 vaccines and booster doses.

Definitions

- **COVID-19 case:** An individual who tested positive for COVID-19 with a positive molecular COVID-19 test, including a PCR and antigen test.
- **COVID-19 hospitalization:** An individual with confirmed COVID-19 who has been identified as being hospitalized through case investigation data in WDRS or linkage with with Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO) records.
- **COVID-19 death:** An individual who tested positive for COVID-19 and died due to complications from COVID-19. This data has been ascertained by internal YHD data.
- A **vaccinated individual** is someone who is ≥ 14 days post-completion of the COVID-19 vaccine primary series and a COVID-19 booster dose.
- An **unvaccinated individual** is someone who has not received an approved COVID-19 vaccine, or has not completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series or booster.
- A **breakthrough case** is defined as an instance when an individual who is fully vaccinated tests positive for COVID-19 at least 14 days after they have completed their primary COVID-19 vaccine series. Partially vaccinated individuals are not counted as breakthrough cases because they are not fully vaccinated.