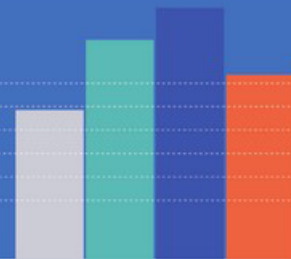


# CHART



## Routine Vaccination Rates in Philadelphia Unstable during the COVID-19 Pandemic

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

The COVID-19 virus has disrupted all of society, including routine vaccinations. Since Philadelphia's Stay at Home Order went into force in March 2020, the Philadelphia Immunization Program saw a significant drop in both routine pediatric and adult vaccines received within the city.

Beginning in late July 2020, the Immunization Program began to see an uptick of routine vaccinations administration. By October 2020, routine vaccination rates recovered to near pre-pandemic levels.

As of July 2021, the Immunization Program continues to see routine vaccine rates almost as high as what we saw before the pandemic. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted gaps in vaccination rates across Philadelphia, especially in African American and Hispanic communities. Gaps in routine vaccination make everyone more vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases, but some populations are impacted much more than others. For instance, members of Philadelphia's under-vaccinated African American and Hispanic communities face higher risk from complications caused by vaccine preventable diseases due to barriers in accessing adequate healthcare. And young children, infants, elders, and immunosuppressed peoples all experience higher risk factors for serious complications that can require hospitalization.

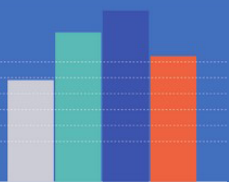
With the COVID-19 virus threatening lives of Philadelphians, we cannot risk the spread of other vaccine preventable diseases. Although routine vaccination rates are close to pre-pandemic levels, there is still much work to be done to keep Philadelphia safe from vaccine preventable disease.

By July 2020, routine vaccine rates fell by almost 60% in comparison to between March to July 2019

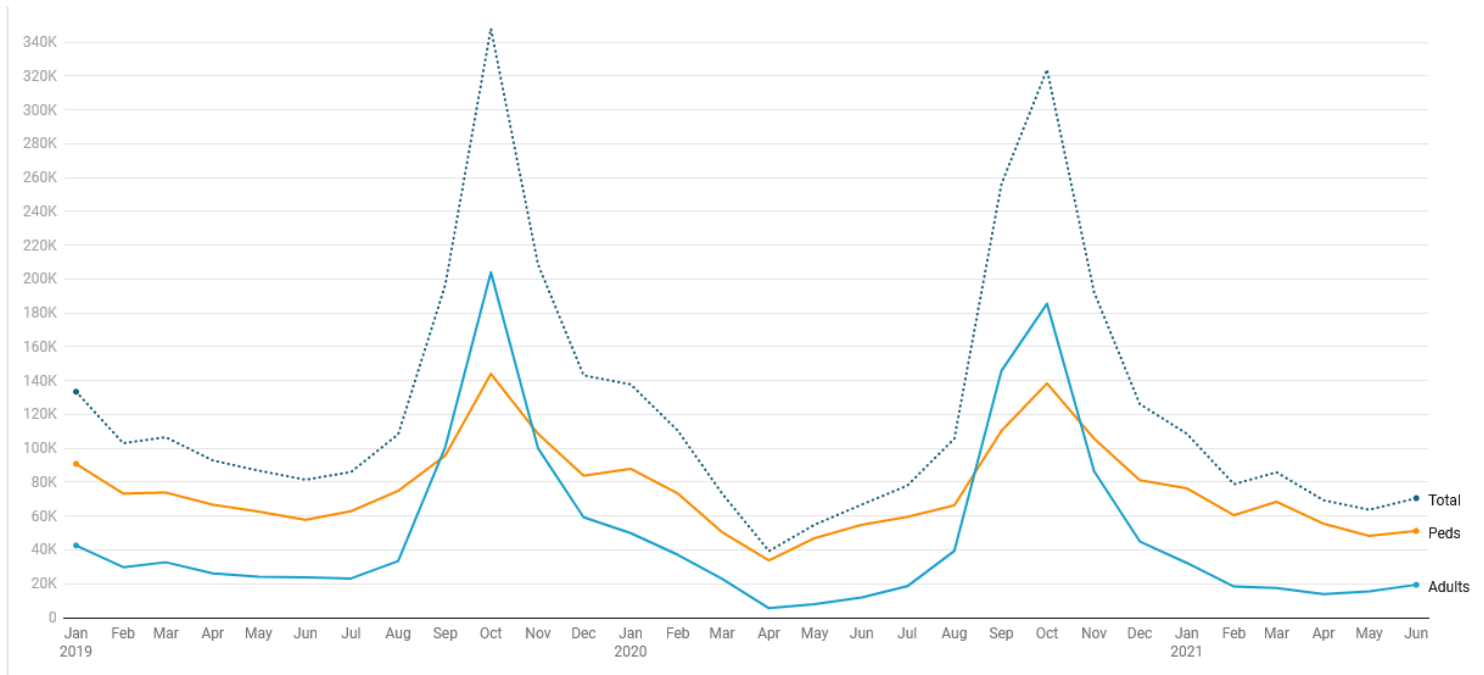
From August to October 2020, routine vaccination rates, especially adult vaccinations, recovered to pre-pandemic levels

As of June 2021, routine vaccination rates have returned to almost pre-pandemic levels

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## Number of Immunizations by Month, Jan 2019 to June 2021



In March 2020, routine vaccine rates dropped by approximately 60%, but have been recovering

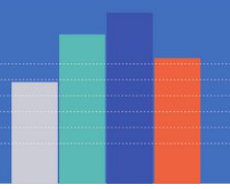
### Routine Vaccine Rates Fell and Then Increased During 2020

Beginning March 17th, 2020, when Philadelphia's Stay at Home Order was issued, the Immunization Program witnessed a dramatic drop in both pediatric and adult vaccine rates, including routine MMR and DTaP vaccines for children and infants. Based on data from PhilaVax, our Immunization Information System, an approximate 60% drop in overall vaccinations was seen during the spring of 2020.

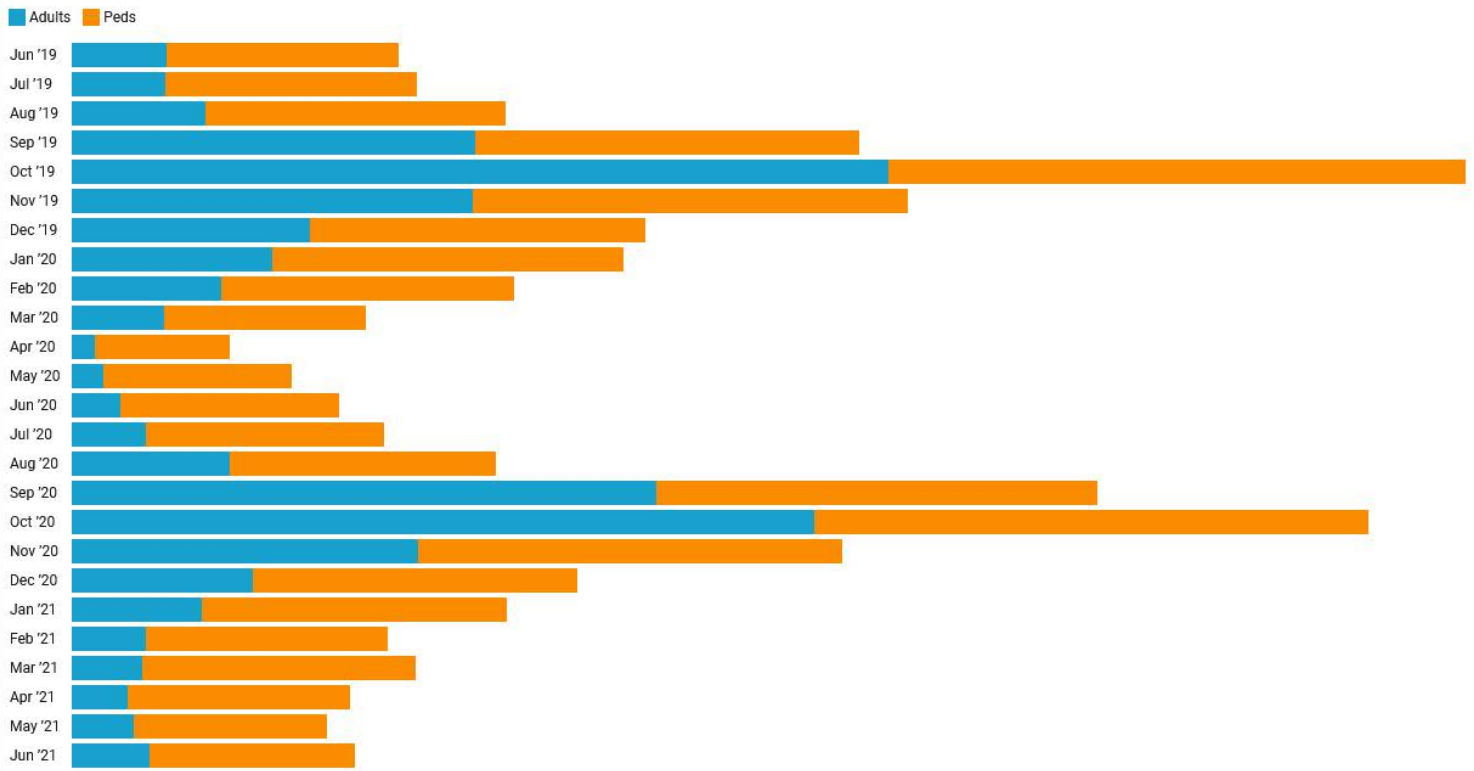
By the end of July 2020, the Immunization Program saw a significant increase in routine vaccinations that lasted through the end of the summer and into the early fall. In October 2020, we recorded over 180,000 adult vaccinations and over 135,000 pediatric vaccinations. This increase in routine vaccinations matched the typical seasonal increase seen each year due to school-required vaccinations and the flu shot.

We attribute this notable increase in vaccinations to a successful influenza vaccine campaign that started running in September 2020.

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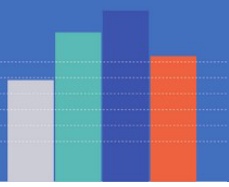
**Number of Immunizations by Month, June 2019 to June 2021**



## Routine Vaccination Rates Stabilized Slightly Below Pre-Pandemic Levels

After the fall 2020 seasonal rise in vaccinations, routine vaccination rates stabilized below what they were in 2019. By June 2021, routine vaccinations rates in Philadelphia have almost returned to vaccination rates during June 2019. Routine vaccinations totals for June 2021 are 13% lower than totals for June 2019.

Although routine vaccination rates are close to pre-pandemic levels, there is still much work to be done to keep every Philadelphian safe from vaccine preventable disease, especially those living in under-vaccinated communities.



## WHAT CAN BE DONE

### The Health Department is:

- Communicating with providers enrolled in our Vaccine for Children (VFC) and Vaccines for Adults at Risk (VFAAR) programs, to learn what concerns patients are reporting about vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Creating materials to send out to parents, encouraging them to make sure their children are up-to-date on immunizations before school in the fall.
- Publishing information on the importance of receiving routine vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic on our website: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/department-of-public-health/disease-prevention/get-vaccinated/>.
- Targeting outreach to under-vaccinated communities of color across the city.

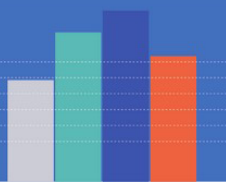
### Health Care providers should:

- Follow up with patients who have missed their scheduled vaccines.
- Increase access to vaccination by expanding office hours and promoting walk-in or expedited immunization activities.

### People can:

- Continue visiting their primary doctor or medical provider, or a Federally Qualified Health Center, to get their scheduled vaccines and regular check-ups.
- Learn about the safety and benefits of vaccines on our website: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/department-of-public-health/disease-prevention/get-vaccinated/>.

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## Resources

**Philadelphia  
Immunization Program  
Website**  
<https://www.vax.phila.gov>

**Supporting  
Immunization Data**  
[https://www.vax.phila.gov/  
index.php/data](https://www.vax.phila.gov/index.php/data)

**Where to get  
vaccinated** [https://  
www.phila.gov/services/  
mental-physical-health/  
get-vaccinated/](https://www.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/get-vaccinated/)

**Immunization Schedules**  
[https://www.cdc.gov/  
vaccines/schedules/  
index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html)

## Suggested Citation

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