

# The State of Our Children: COVID-19 and Kids



February 28, 2022

There are signs that the spread of the Omicron variant is beginning to slow, with changes in public health guidance occurring across the State and in our communities. More access to vaccines and simpler at-home COVID-19 tests have made a difference in our ability to respond to the virus. We have also learned a great deal about the virus and its impact on kids through recently released research.

**This is the state of our children for February 28, 2022.**

## COVID-19 and Diabetes in Children

**Dr. Nedim Cakan, Valley Children's Endocrinology Medical Director**

A new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) compared patients under the age of 18 who were diagnosed with COVID-19 to those – matched by age and gender – who did not receive a COVID-19 diagnosis during the pandemic or who received a pre-pandemic, non-COVID-19 acute respiratory infection (ARI) diagnosis. This study concluded that children under the age of 18 who recovered from COVID-19 had a significantly greater risk of developing Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes than those who did not have a COVID-19 infection. These research results were based on two sets of data on children newly diagnosed with diabetes between March 1, 2020, and February 26, 2021. Researchers found that new diabetes diagnoses were 166% (in a data set of 80,893 patients) and 31% (in a much larger data set of 439,439 patients) more likely to occur among children with COVID-19 than among those without COVID-19 during the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

Previous studies have long established a strong correlation between enteroviruses and diabetes. This latest research adds COVID-19 to that list of viruses linked to increased incidence of diabetes in children.

While we know there is a correlation between viruses – including COVID-19 – and diabetes, this study did not identify the specific mechanisms in the virus that triggered Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. This study speaks to the possible impacts of COVID-19 on children in both the short and long-term, and to the renewed importance of preventative strategies against COVID-19, including vaccinations, masks, hand hygiene and caution in crowded settings where social distancing is not possible.

### What are we seeing at Valley Children's?

Throughout the pandemic, as more children have been exposed to the viral infection, the rise in new diabetes cases has followed. Valley Children's Pediatric Diabetes and Endocrinology practice – ranked as one of the best in the country by U.S. News and World Report – had fewer than 300 newly diagnosed patients with diabetes mellitus (DM) for five years prior to the pandemic. In 2020, our team made 570 new diagnoses of DM and 675 in 2021, an increase of more than 50% in both Type 1 and Type 2 cases over a two-year period.

Common symptoms of diabetes include increased thirst, frequent urination, unintentional weight loss and fatigue among children. As parents, community leaders, school nurses, providers and others caring for our kids, it is important to keep an eye out for these signs in children.

For more information on COVID-19 or diabetes, contact a child's primary care provider. In case of any emergency, dial 9-1-1.

<sup>1</sup> Barrett CE, Koyama AK, Alvarez P, et al. Risk for newly diagnosed Diabetes >30 days after SARS-CoV-2 infection among persons aged <18 Years. – United States, March 1, 2020–June 28, 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2022;71:59–65. DOI: [https://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7102e2external icon](https://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7102e2external%20icon).

## Weekly Data and Trends Across Valley Children's Healthcare Network (ages 0-20)

(as of February 20, 2022)

	Tests Administered	Positive Tests	Positivity Rate	Hospitalizations
Week of Feb. 14	▼ 940	▼ 92 (48*)	▼ 9.8%	▲ 8
Week of Feb. 7	1,093	153 (86*)	14%	5
Week of Jan. 31	1,045	239 (142*)	22.9%	9
Week of Jan. 24	1,169	328 (203*)	28.1%	9
Week of Jan. 17	1,558	527 (343*)	33.8%	16
Week of Jan. 10	1,628	441 (286*)	27.1%	9
Week of Jan. 3	1,465	281 (181*)	19.2%	11
Week of Dec. 27	891	62 (55*)	7%	4

\*COVID+ patients in Valley Children's Emergency Department

# WEAR A MASK • WASH/SANITIZE HANDS • GET VACCINATED



For more information visit [valleychildrens.org/covid19](https://valleychildrens.org/covid19)  
or email [contactus@valleychildrens.org](mailto:contactus@valleychildrens.org)