THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

COVID-19 Press Briefing

March 5, 2021

Daily Change in COVID-19 Cases, US

January 22, 2020 – March 3, 2021

TOTAL Cases Reported Since 1/22/20

28,580,198

NEW Cases Reported to CDC on 3/3/21

65,424

Change in 7-Day Case Average

-5.7%

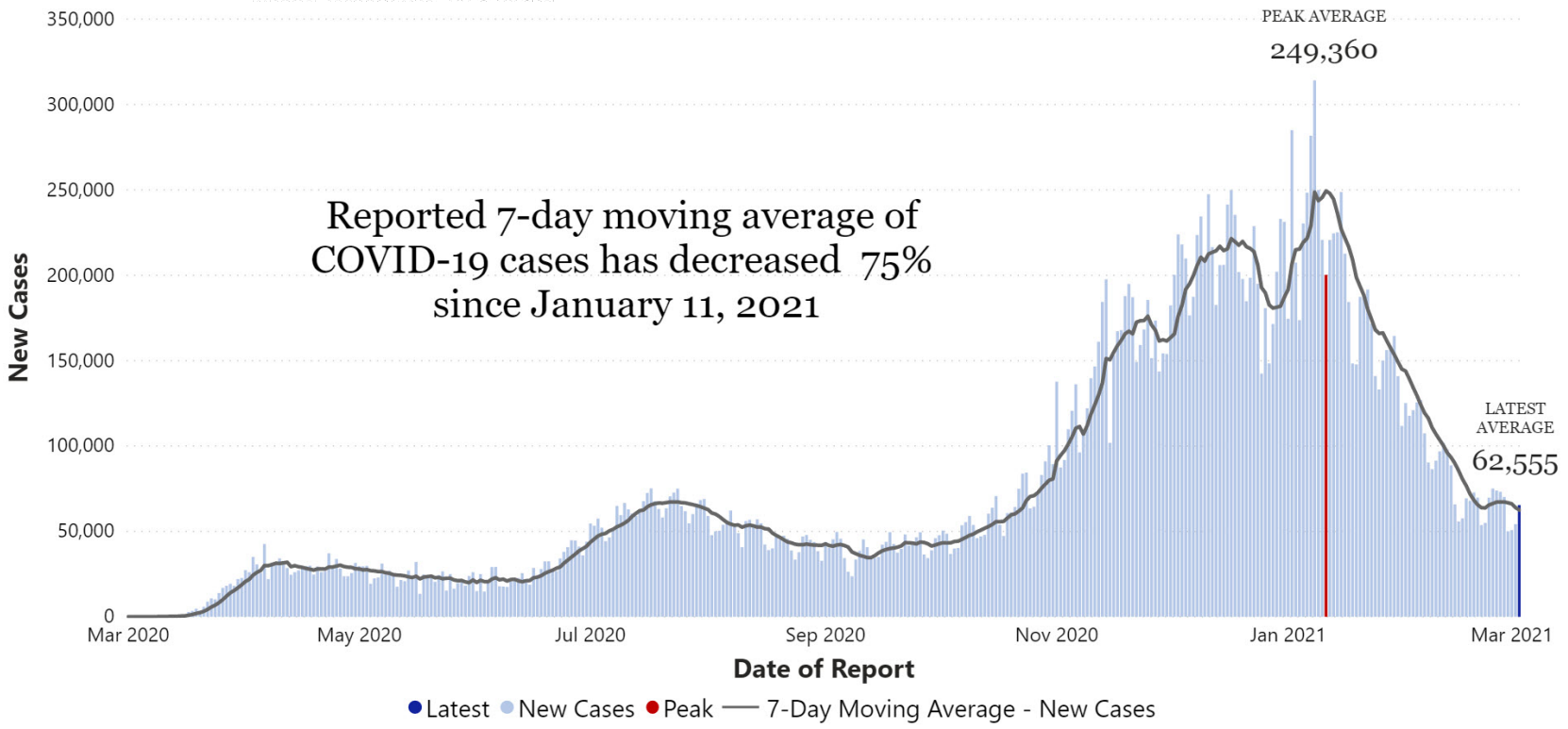
Current 7-Day Case Average (2/25/21 - 3/3/21)

62,555

Prior 7-Day Case Average (2/18/21 - 2/24/21)

66,306

Peaks in New Cases and Highest 7-Day Moving Average		
	Highest Daily Number of New Cases	**Highest 7-Day Moving Average**
Current	314,172 (1/8/21)	249,360 (1/11/21)
2nd Peak	75,192 (7/17/20)	67,278 (7/23/20)
1st Peak	42,597 (4/6/20)	31,933 (4/12/20)



New Admissions of Patients with Confirmed COVID-19

August 1, 2020 – March 2, 2021

Patients Currently Hospitalized with COVID on 3/2/21

41,728

New Admissions on 3/2/21

5,390

Peak in New Admissions (1/5/21)

18,009

Change in 7-Day Average of New Admissions

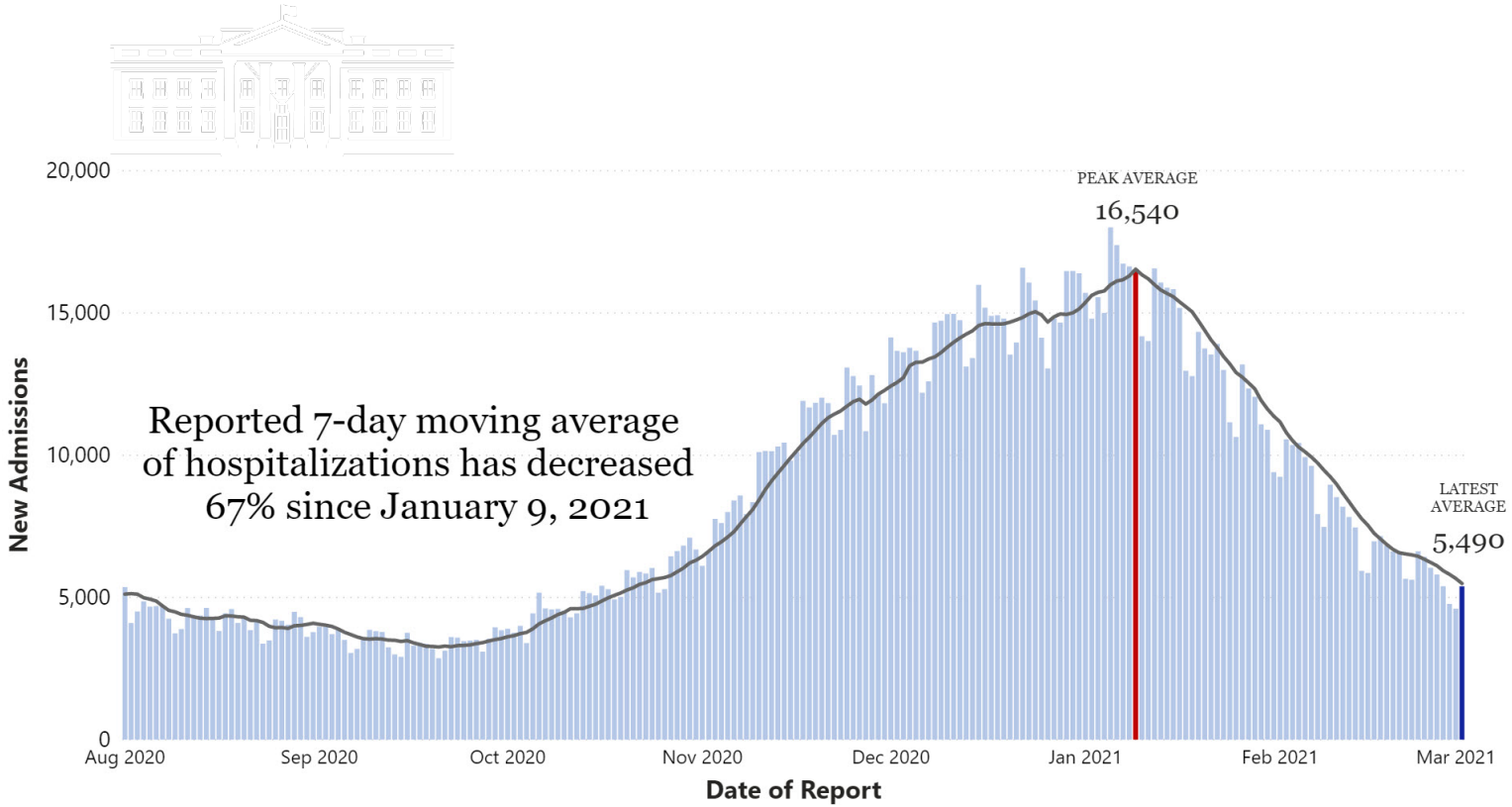
-14.8%

Current 7-Day Average of New Admissions (2/24/21 - 3/2/21)

5,490

Prior 7-Day Average of New Admissions (2/17/21 - 2/23/21)

6,446



Daily Change in COVID-19 Deaths, United States

January 22, 2020 – March 3, 2021

TOTAL Deaths Reported Since 1/22/2020

517,224

NEW Deaths Reported to CDC on 3/3/21

1,947

Change in 7-Day Death Average

-6.7%

Current 7-Day Death Average (2/25/21 - 3/3/21)

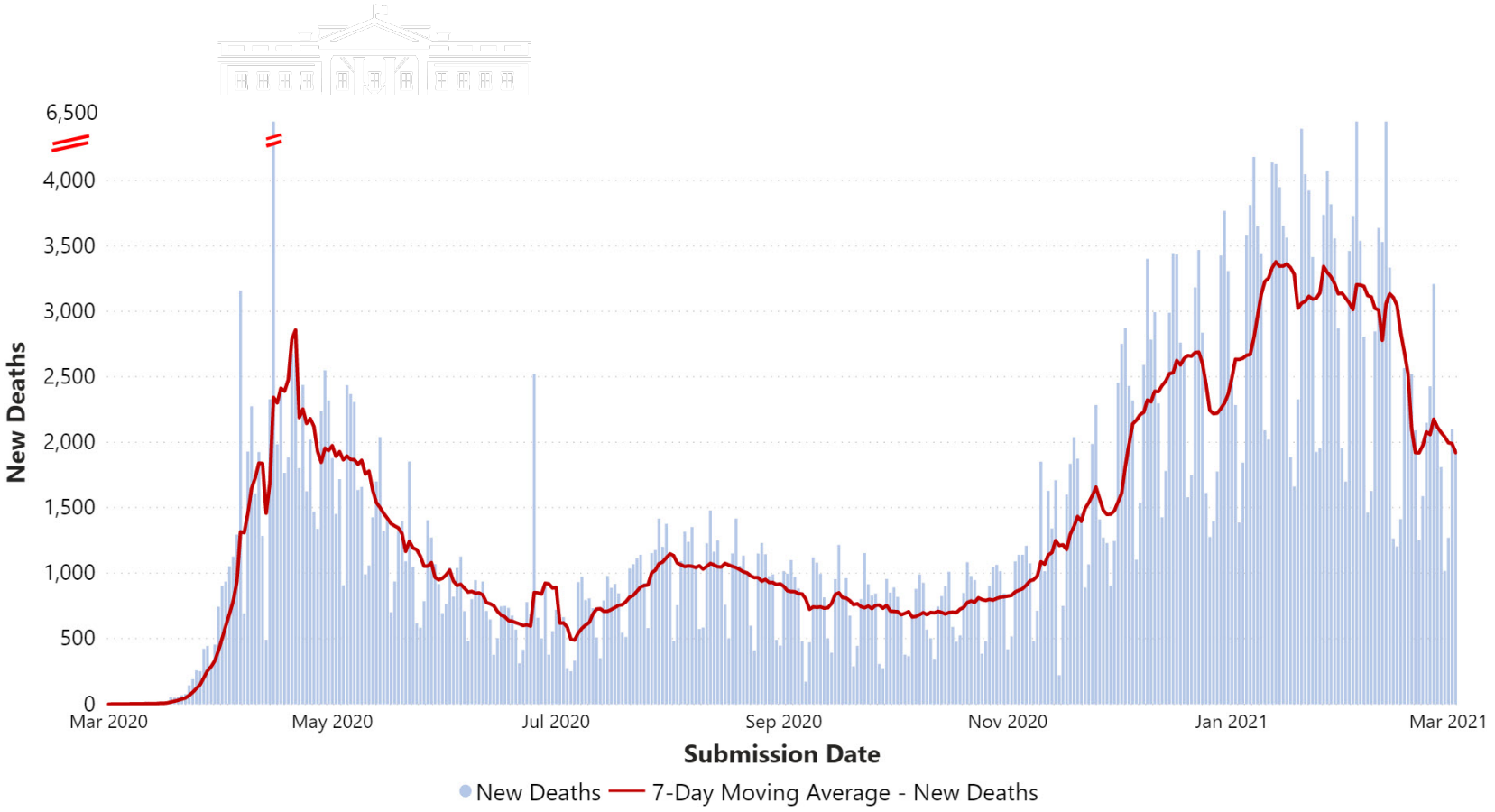
1,921

Prior 7-Day Death Average (2/18/21 - 2/24/21)

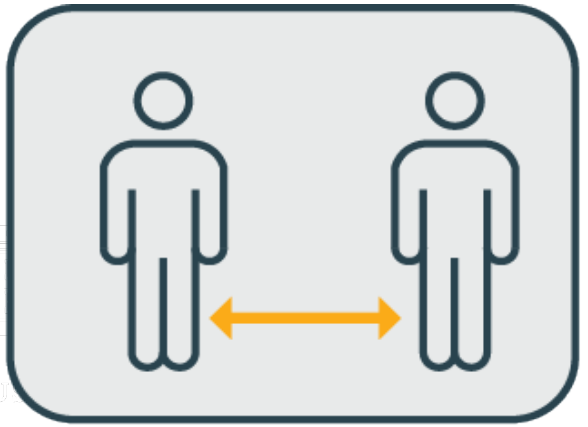
2,060

Forecasted Total Deaths by 3/27/21

540,000-564,000

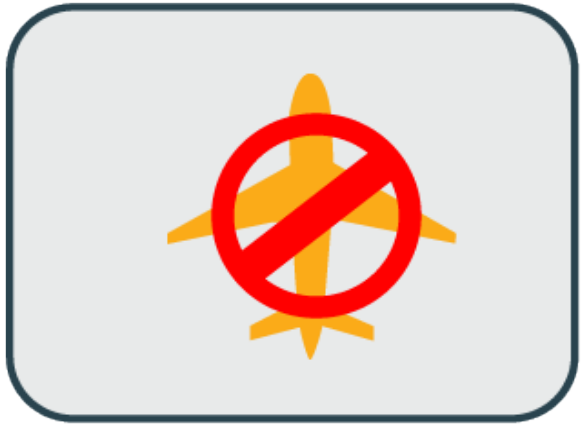


WEAR A MASK



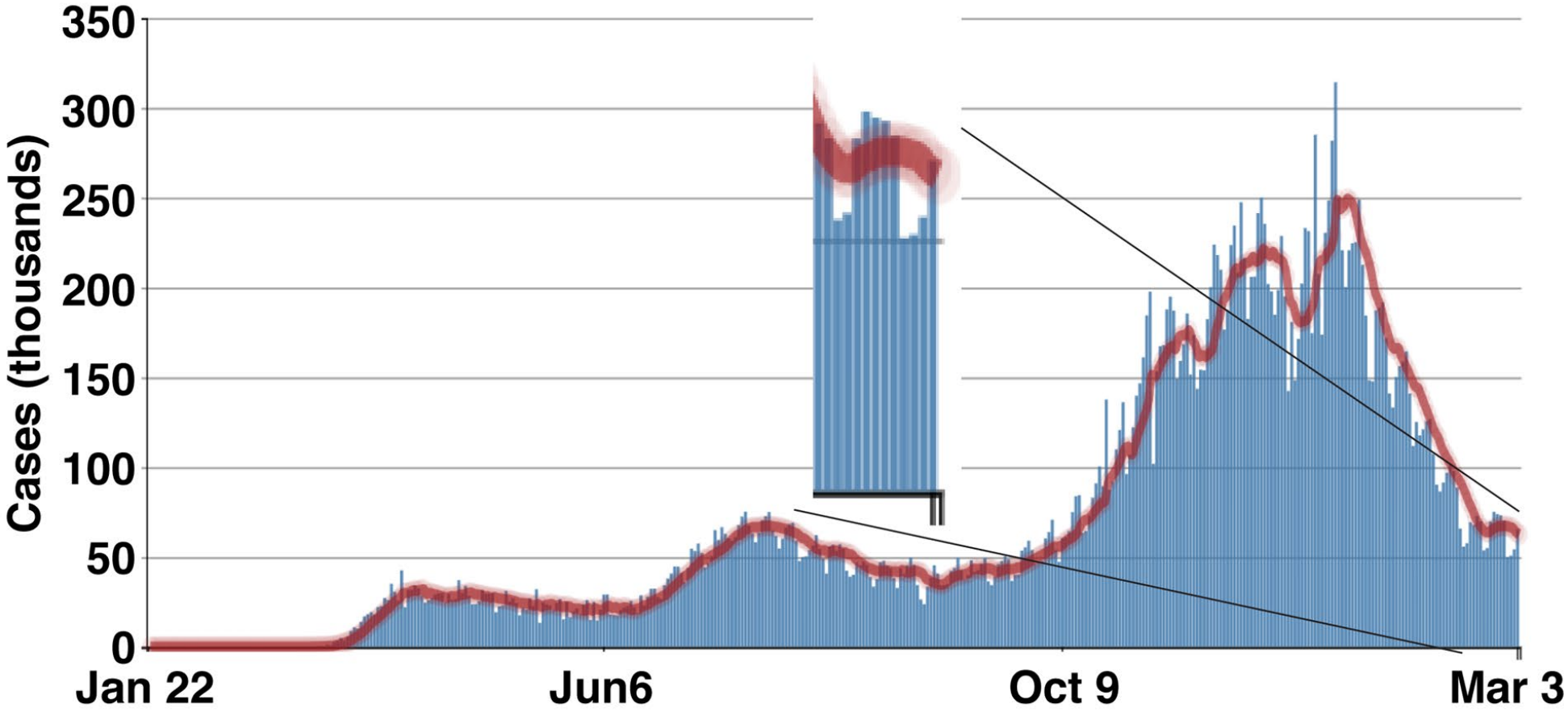
STAY 6 FEET APART

AVOID CROWDS



AVOID TRAVEL

Daily Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases in the United States Reported to CDC



The Washington Post

March 4, 2021

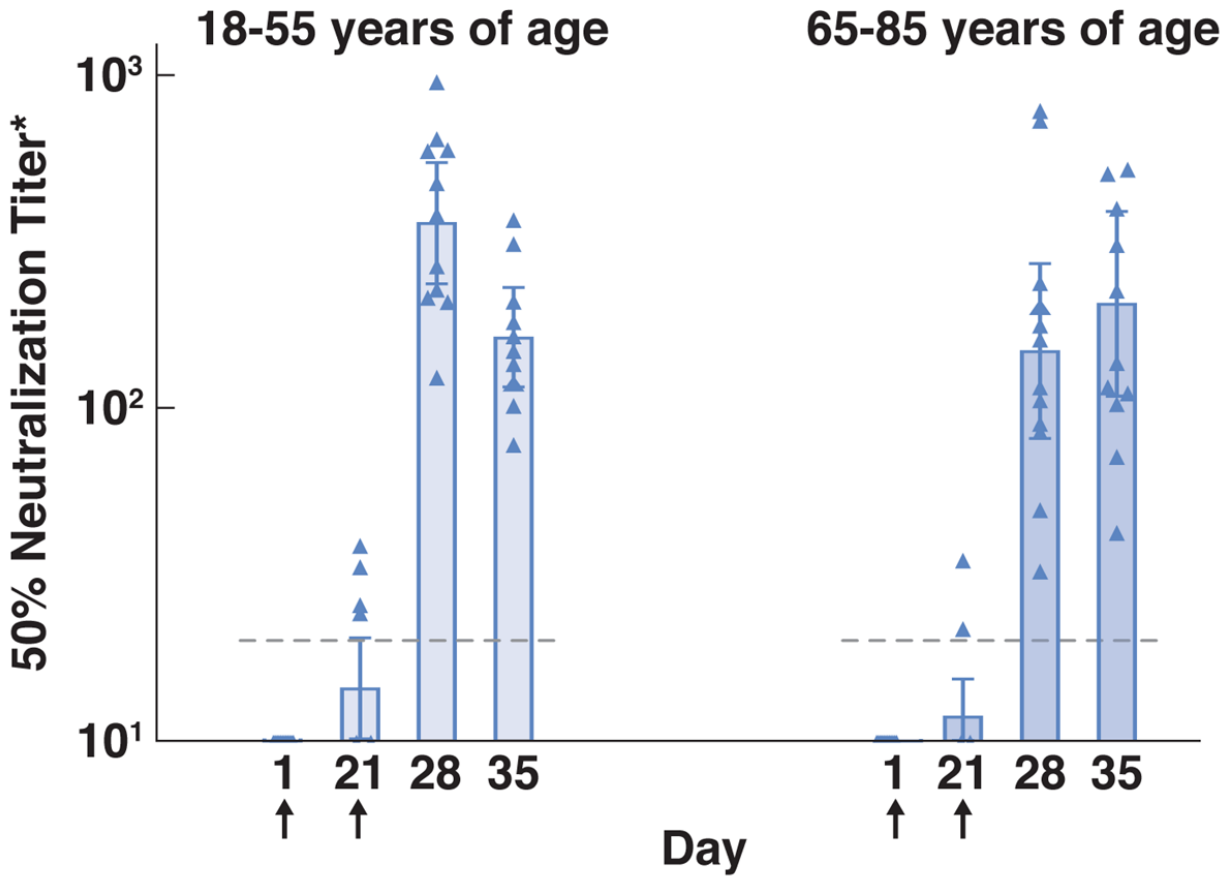
COVID-19 Resurgence Ends Six-Week Drop in New Case Numbers Across Europe

- New COVID-19 cases in the European region rose by 9 percent over the past week
- More than half of the region is seeing an increase in new infections, including a surge in eastern Europe driven by B.1.1.7 variant

Virology 101 – Viral Variants

- RNA viruses tend to mutate – poor proof-reading mechanisms
- Viruses cannot mutate if they do not replicate (in infected people)
- High baseline levels of community spread of virus favors mutations and the evolution of variants
- Selection pressures favor virus mutations:
  - pressure to enhance its own replication and propagate itself
  - pressure to evade neutralizing antibodies → implications for vaccines and potential role of immune suppressed individuals
- Suboptimal immune response favors the generation of variants

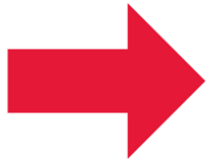
Pfizer/Biontech COVID-19 Vaccine: Neutralizing Antibody Titers After First and Second Dose



*50% SARS-CoV-2–neutralizing geometric mean titers at 30 μg dose

Source: EW Walsh et al. *NEJM* 383:2439, 2020.

Suboptimal immune response to wild-type virus



- **Promotion of generation of variants**
- **Lack of redundancy of immune response to suppress variants**

Addressing Viral Variants

Vaccination

- Maximize immune response against wildtype virus
- Boost with variant-specific vaccine

Public Health Measures

- Masks
- Distance
- Avoid congregate settings
- Wash hands

Published online
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JAMA
The Journal of the
American Medical Association

Approaches for Optimal Use of Different COVID-19 Vaccines -- Issues of Viral Variants and Vaccine Efficacy

John P. Moore, PhD

"The combination of a high virus replication rate within an individual (a high viral load) and a suboptimal level of neutralizing antibodies is the exact environment in which resistant viruses are considered likely to emerge and spread…When people are infected after the first dose but before the second dose, the virus can replicate in the setting of a suboptimal level of neutralizing antibodies, a situation in which resistant variants may emerge."

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