

# [***Florida Defies CDC Telling Under-65s To Skip Covid Boosters Though The State Leads In Covid Deaths Nationwide***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6961-6XD1-DXVP-500S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 825 words

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**Highlight:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention slammed Florida s decision as dangerous.

**Body**

**Topline**

Florida s surgeon general urged residents under 65 not to get the Covid-19 booster, ignoring guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but the state, which has defied pandemic health directives before, is leading the United States in Covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths.

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Gov. Ron DeSantis (R-Fla.) said he would not use "healthy Floridians as guinea pigs for new booster shots," accusing the boosters of being ineffective and unsafe. (Photo by Steven Ferdman/Getty Images)

Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Joseph Ladapo, Florida s surgeon general, said Wednesday he directed his department to advise against the use of Covid-19 boosters,stating virtually every walking human being has some degree of immunity and questioning the safety of the vaccines.

Gov. Ron DeSantis (R-Fla.)blastedthe CDC guidance, stating he would not allow healthy Floridians as guinea pigs for new booster shots that have not been proven to be safe or effective.

Florida s defiance came one day after the CDCurgedeveryone 6 months and older to get the updated Covid-19 booster this fall, citing anuptickin cases nationwide.

Theupdatedboosters, which target the currently dominant variants, were developed by Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech and were approved by the Food and Drug Administration on Monday.

Floridarecorded116 deaths from Covid-19 in the past week, the most in the nation, the third most per 100,000 people, and more than 14% of the country s total Covid-19 deaths.

The state alsologged504 Covid-19 hospitalizations in the past week, again the most in the nation and more than 11% of the total hospital admissions in the United States, with about 70%reportedlyconsisting of people 65 and older.

Florida has had more Covid-19deathsover the past three months than any other state, with 1,106 ahead of California, which has had 843.

**Chief Critic**

Mandy Cohen, director of the CDC,slammedFlorida s guidance as dangerous, stating the vaccines are proven safe; they are effective, and they have been thoroughly and independently reviewed by the FDA and CDC.

**Tangent**

DeSantis is one of several Republican presidential contenderswarningagainst the updated booster and stoking fears of looming mask mandates (which there is no evidence will return at the state or federal level). Former President Donald Trumpallegedthe radical Democrats are trying hard to restart Covid hysteria at a campaign rally in Rapid City, South Dakota . Sen. Tim Scott accused the radical Left of trying to bring back school closures and mask mandates though few school districtsbrieflymoved to online learning to fend off Covid-19 infections in August, there isno evidencewidespread school closures are coming.

**Key Background**

DeSantis quicklyevolvedfrom implementing typical Covid-19 prevention measures in the early days of the pandemic to reopening Florida by May 2020 and since then, he s become a vocal mask and vaccine skeptic, questioning the safety and efficacy of Covid-19 vaccines and resisting federal health guidances. In September 2021, he appointed Lapado, avaccine skeptic, as surgeon general.Reportsin April indicated Lapado had personally altered data from a state Covid-19 vaccine study to suggest some doses pose a higher risk for young men. In June 2022, DeSantisrefusedto preorder vaccines for children under 5, making Florida the only state not to do so, claiming the risks outweigh the benefits of receiving vaccines. Heproposedbanning Covid-19 mandates in Florida in January. DeSantis has frequentlytoutedhis state s Covid-19 response on the campaign trail andcriticizedTrump for following guidance from health officials and former White House medical advisor Anthony Fauci.

**Surprising Fact**

As Covid-19 and vaccines continue to be rife with political division, studies have indicated people living in counties that voted Republican in 2020 fared worse than those that voted Democrat. Counties where 70% or more of residents voted Republican had nearly 73 more Covid-19 deaths per 100,000 people through October 2021 than counties that largely voted Democrat, according to astudypublished in**Health Affairs**. Fewer deaths were likely associated with more proactive measures and better compliance with mask mandates and vaccination, said senior author Dylan Roby, an associate professor of health, society and behavior at the University of California.

**Big Number**

81,607. That s how many Floridians havediedfrom Covid-19, the third most in the nation, just behind California and Texas. Florida has also had the third most Covid-19 cases in the United States with 7,572,282, again behind California and Texas. It has had the eighth most total cases per 100,000 people.

**Further Reading**

DeSantis administration advises against Covid shots for Florida residents under 65(NBC News)

Covid Hero or Lockdown Ron ? DeSantis and Trump Renew Pandemic ***Politics***(New York Times)

How Ron DeSantis transformed into an anti-public health crusader(Vox)

**Load-Date:** September 16, 2023

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