



## The Situation in Richmond

The [number of new cases](#) is on the rise across the country and continues to fluctuate in Central Virginia. As of Oct. 22, Central Virginia is averaging 176 new COVID-19 cases per day, compared to 182 new cases on Oct. 8 and 118 on Oct. 1. Statewide, the commonwealth is averaging 1,023 new cases per day, up from 973 on Oct. 8 and 747 on Oct. 1.

Although the number of new cases is a popular virus metric, it is important to look at more than one metric when assessing the current pandemic status. “The rate of new cases alone can be misleading because of the increased number of people being tested, particularly those who are younger in age,” says WellcomeMD’s Dr. Mary Colfer. “The number of hospitalizations from COVID-19 is a strong metric to follow, as is the number of deaths month-to-month.”

When looking at hospitalizations, Central Virginia is faring better than the state overall. The average [number of people hospitalized](#) with COVID-19 in Central Virginia is 223 as of Oct. 22, down from 238 on Oct. 15 and 231 on Oct. 8. Statewide, the average number of COVID-19 hospitalizations is 999 as of Oct. 22, up from 973 on Oct. 15 and 923 on Oct. 8.

The [death rate](#) continues to fluctuate. As of Oct. 22, Central Virginia is averaging 4 deaths per day, compared to 1 death a week ago and 2 deaths two weeks ago. At the state level, the commonwealth is averaging 19 deaths per day as of Oct. 22, up from 9 deaths a week ago and 14 deaths two weeks ago.

## The Situation in Charlotte

The [number of new COVID-19 cases](#) is on the rise across the U.S., including in Mecklenburg County. On Oct.18, the county recorded 138 new COVID-19 cases, compared to 72 new cases on Oct. 4.

Although the number of new cases is a popular virus metric, it is important to look at more than one metric when assessing the current pandemic status. “The rate of new cases alone can be misleading because of the increased number of people being tested, particularly those who are younger in age,” says WellcomeMD’s Dr. John Woodward. “The number of hospitalizations from COVID-19 is a strong metric to follow.”

Hospitalizations are increasing in both [Mecklenburg County](#) and [the state](#). The county reported 106 COVID-19 hospitalizations on Oct.18, up from 78 on Oct. 4. North Carolina reported 1,158 people in the hospital with COVID-19 on Oct. 18, up from 973 on Oct. 4. "The virus is clearly a concern locally and nationally, with its significant virulence, and we should continue to appropriately mask and distance," advises Dr. Woodward.

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or believe you have been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19, please contact our office immediately at (704) 444-0999.

## Planning for a COVID-19 Holiday Season

With the weather turning cooler and outdoor gatherings becoming less practical, many people are wondering how to socialize in the coming months. The CDC has shared [recommendations for in-person holiday gatherings](#) to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 as the holiday season approaches.

The CDC's suggestions separate behaviors by level of risk, from lowest to highest, to help you determine what makes the most sense for you and your loved ones. "Remaining vigilant about taking precautions is key as we approach the colder months," says WellcomeMD's Dr. Neal Carl. "It can be tempting to let your guard down around family and friends, but we must remember that COVID-19 is still very real. We want people to **continue to wear masks, continue to wash hands, and continue to practice social distancing.**" Ultimately, following these safety measures and avoiding close contact with people who do not live in your household is vital for reducing the risk of virus exposure or spread.

## Do You Have Medicare Questions?

Medicare open enrollment is currently underway, and we want to help answer your program questions. Join WellcomeMD and Medicare specialist Bryan Gay of Boomer Insurance Group for a virtual seminar on Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. We will discuss the ins and outs of Medicare and ways you can take advantage of the program. [RSVP here.](#)

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