

Together We Thrive

Arizona and COVID-19: Spring 2023

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COVID-19 has not disappeared but is still with us. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports there are 101,437 cases and 1,327 deaths in the U.S. during the week of April 19, 2023. The lowest COVID-19 case numbers occur during the spring. This is a good time to improve your mental and social health by participating in family/public gatherings and events, traveling more, and tackling tasks that you had postponed during the pandemic. On April 20, 2023, the CDC reports most of the U.S. and Arizona have low-risk transmission levels including Pima County (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. CDC Community Transmission Level Map: April 13, 2023

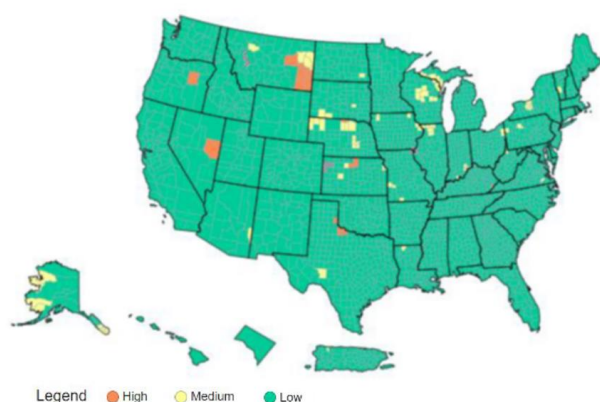
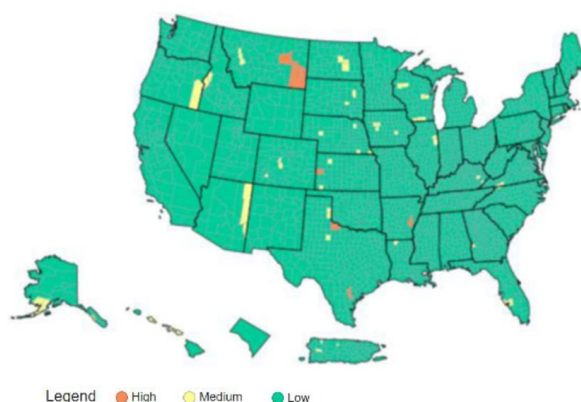


Figure 2. CDC Community Transmission Level Map: April 20, 2023



The Arizona and Pima County weekly case numbers have been low and plateaued (see Figures 3 and 4). The United States 7-day positivity rate is 6.1% (CDC – April 19). On April 9, the state and county positivity rates were 11% and 8%, respectively (AzDHS).

Figure 3. Arizona Weekly COVID-19 Cases: January 1, 2020 to April 15, 2023

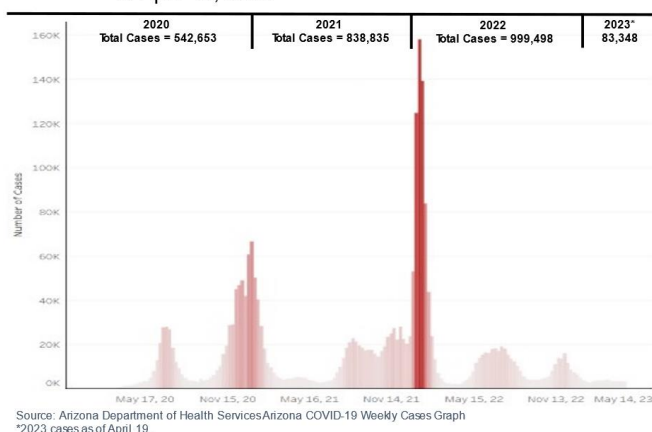
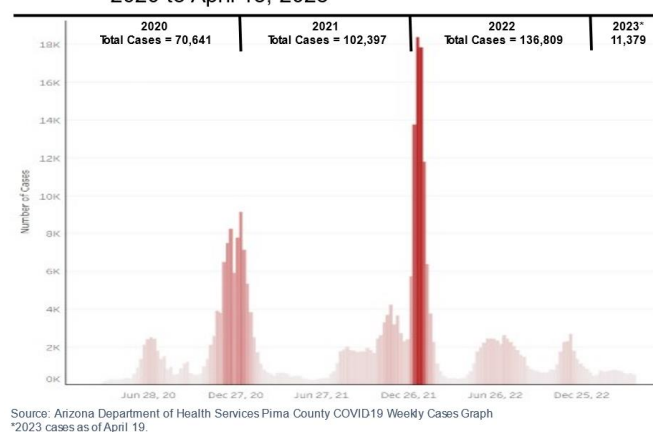


Figure 4. Pima County Weekly COVID-19 Cases: February 1, 2020 to April 15, 2023



Most cases are *mild* or *moderate*, and few cases are *severe* (require hospitalization and/or result in death). The state and county weekly cases have decreased the week of April 19. Arizona and

Pima County four-week COVID case, hospitalization, and death numbers shown on Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Arizona Total and Weekly Numbers of COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths

Date	Total Cases	Weekly Case	Total Hospital	Weekly Hospital	Total Deaths	Weekly Deaths
03-29-2023	2,454,320	3,258	135,555	455	33,225	35
04-05-2023	2,457,251	2,931	135,980	425	33,258	33
04-12-2023	2,460,926	3,675	136,431	451	33,293	35
04-19-2023	2,464,334	3,408	136,817	386	33,372	79

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Dashboard. Arizona 2021 population est. is 7,285,370, July 1, 2021 – Arizona OEO.

Table 2. Pima County Total and Weekly Numbers of COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths

Date	Total Cases	Weekly Case	Total Hospital	Weekly Hospital	Total Deaths	Weekly Deaths
03-29-2023	319,365	644	15,299	64	4,328	7
04-05-2023	319,941	576	15,338	39	4,333	5
04-12-2023	320,660	719	15,392	54	4,341	8
04-19-2023	321,226	566	15,434	42	4,355	14

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Dashboard. Pima County 2021 population est. is 1,058,318, July 1, 2021 – Ariz. OEO.

The CDC reports 230,485,008 (69.4% of population) who completed their primary series (previously – fully vaccinated). 94.3% of the senior (65+) population (51,673,588) who completed their primary series, and 23,221,265 (42.4%) received their bivalent booster on April 19. There are 4,656,517 (63.9%) in Arizona and 737,658 (69.7%) in Pima County who are fully vaccinated (AzDHS – April 19).

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the risks of getting a severe case, but you can still get virus. Those who are high risk in getting a severe case need to have most the updated COVID-19 booster vaccines (e.g., Pfizer or Moderna bivalent vaccine that include both the original virus and Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 variants).

It is expected President Biden will announce “*the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency is over*” on May 11, 2023. What will change? Not much in the short run. The virus will not disappear; it will still be with us. Like the past three years, there will be case surges in the summer 2023. As long as the federal government purchased vaccines, COVID tests, and COVID drug treatments last, these will remain free to all people, regardless of health insurance coverage. However, at home COVID tests will no longer be free. There are pharmacies providing at home COVID tests free – stock up before May 11th. The availability of timely COVID-19 statistics will be less (e.g., John Hopkins University had stopped collecting COVID statistics as of March 10, 2023).

The *Together We Thrive* website (www.togetherwethrivecovid19.com) provides weekly updates on Arizona and counties transmission risk levels, state and Pima County weekly cases trends, and weekly COVID-19 health tips. The website also identifies COVID-19 resources and services. Upcoming TWT events post on the website.

There will be weekly case fluctuations, but the numbers of severe COVID-19 cases and deaths in Arizona and Pima County remain low because of the high level of population immunity, the availability of drugs in treating the virus, and most Omicron variant cases are mild or moderate.

Be safe, and stay healthy, calm, and positive.