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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Mexico Reaches 5,000 COVID-19-Related Deaths

SANTA FE- New Mexico state health officials announced on Monday that 5,002 New Mexicans had died due to COVID-19.

“These aren’t just numbers - they are our family members, friends, and neighbors, and we grieve for them and their families,” said New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) Acting Secretary David R. Scrase, M.D.

New Mexico hospitals continue to strain under the pressure of the pandemic. Although there are fewer COVID patients than this time last year, the vast majority of New Mexicans in the hospital for COVID are unvaccinated. This increases the strain on hospitals and staff who are also caring for patients who unfortunately delayed care due to the pandemic.

Vaccination remains the most powerful tool at New Mexicans’ disposal. Between February 1st, 2021 and October 11th, 2021, there were 1,039 COVID-related deaths in New Mexico. Of those deaths, 967 were unvaccinated. “This means that nearly 1,000 people in New Mexico have died who didn’t need to die. If every eligible New Mexican got vaccinated, we could put an end to this pandemic,” added Dr. Scrase.

DOH urges New Mexicans to continue following all DOH- and CDC-recommended safe practices, including:

- [Getting a COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Getting a booster, when it is available to them](#)
- Wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth
- [Getting tested for COVID-19](#) if:
 - You have [COVID-19 symptoms](#) including cough, fever, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and/or loss of taste or smell.
 - You don’t have symptoms but were in close contact or are a household member of someone who has tested positive and are in their infectious period. This is recommended regardless of vaccination status.

- You don't have symptoms, but you are unvaccinated and live or work in a high-risk congregate setting such as long-term care facilities, detention centers, and correctional facilities.
- You are a patient scheduled for surgery or hospital admission, even if you're fully vaccinated. Some medical facilities may require testing prior to surgery or admission.
- For New Mexicans who are able to do so, the Department encourages the use of Vault at-home tests for surveillance testing: <https://learn.vaulthealth.com/nm/>. New Mexicans can order tests to be delivered to their home at no cost. To be able to use the Vault tests, a person needs access to the internet, an email address, and a photo ID.
- New Mexicans can also access COVID testing at Curative sites and other locations, which can be found through the NMDOH website: <https://findatestnm.org/>. The NMDOH urges New Mexicans to avoid going to health clinics, hospitals, or urgent care for testing unless they are symptomatic and have been exposed to COVID-19.
- **Getting treatment using mAbs**
 - Monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) are proteins that identify harmful foreign invaders, like COVID-19. They attach to the foreign molecule, preventing it from infecting other cells in your body.
 - Anyone 12 years and older, who is positive for COVID-19, has mild symptoms, and has a medical condition, can get treated using mAbs.
 - Get a referral from your medical provider or call the hotline at 855-600-3453.

All New Mexicans 12 and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. DOH encourages all New Mexicans to schedule their vaccination with their primary care physicians - or to schedule their vaccine appointments at vaccineNM.org.

NMDOH

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The Department of Health works to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and deliver services to all New Mexicans. As New Mexico's largest state agency, DOH offers public health services in all 33 counties and collaborates with 23 Native American tribes, Pueblos and nations.