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Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health

COVID-19 Vaccine Update: Updated 2023-2024 Formulations of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine

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Table of Contents

Contents

COVID-19 Vaccine Update: Updated 2023-2024 Formulations of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine 1

Changes to the COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations 2023-20242

What does this all mean?.....2

 What is different about the updated (2023-24 formula) Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines?2

 Who is recommended to receive the updated 2023-24 Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines?2

Frequently Asked Questions:3

 Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines on the same day?3

Will my insurance cover the new COVID-19 vaccine? What if I don't have insurance? (adapted from the Public Health Communications Collaborative).....4

 Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I recently had COVID-19 disease?.....4

 Are other COVID-19 vaccines (other than mRNA vaccines) available in the United States for someone needing a booster dose?4

 What are CDC recommendations for people who received the Novavax or Janssen (J&J) COVID-19 vaccines in the past?.....5

Key Messages: (Adapted from Vaccinate Your Family, CDC and Public Health Communications Collaborative)5

Messaging Resources6

References6

Appendix.....7

 Table A. Timeline of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations in the United States 2020 – 20237

Changes to the COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations 2023-2024

On September 11, 2023, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [authorized and approved](#) the updated 2023-24 formulations of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which makes recommendations to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the use of immunizations, met on September 12, 2023, and voted on [recommendations](#) for the use of the updated 2023-24 formulations of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

What does this all mean?

What is different about the updated (2023-24 formula) Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines?

- These are both monovalent* vaccines that have been updated to protect against the Omicron XBB.1.5 subvariant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19.
- The updated (2023-24 formula) monovalent Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines are made using the same mRNA technology the manufacturers have used since the original COVID-19 vaccines were released in December 2020.
- In September 2022, a bivalent* mRNA COVID-19 vaccine was recommended. These bivalent mRNA vaccines are no longer recommended in the United States as they have been replaced by the updated vaccines.
- Updated 2023-2024 ** mRNA COVID-19 vaccine formulations are based on the coronavirus XBB.1.5 variant to more closely target the variants that are currently circulating.
- COVID-19 vaccines reduce the risk of developing severe COVID-19 illness, complications, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. In studies that have been recently conducted, the updated 2023-24 mRNA COVID-19 vaccines were noted to provide cross-protection against other currently circulating viral variants causing COVID-19, including the EG.5 and BA.2.86 variants.

*"Mono" means one, and "bi" means two. Monovalent vaccines are based on one strain of the coronavirus, and bivalent vaccines are based on two strains.

**See Appendix. Table A, for a timeline of mRNA COVID-19 recommendations in the United States since 2020.

Who is recommended to receive the updated 2023-24 Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines?

- COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older in the United States to prevent hospitalization and serious complications from COVID-19. CDC recommends that people stay [up to date](#) with COVID-19 vaccination.

- No FDA-approved or FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines exist for children younger than 6 months.
- Everyone 5 years of age and older is recommended to receive one dose of the updated (2023–2024 formula) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of whether they have received a COVID-19 vaccine in the past.
- CDC recommends waiting at least 2 months since your last COVID-19 vaccine dose before you receive the updated (2023-2024 Formula) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

Recommendations for children 6 months through 4 years of age

Children 6 months through 4 years of age receiving a COVID-19 vaccine for the first time should:

- Receive either 2 doses of updated (2023–2024 formula) Moderna or 3 doses of updated (2023–2024 formula) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

Children 6 months through 4 years of age who have received previous COVID-19 vaccine doses:

- Need 1 or 2 doses of the updated (2023–2024 formula) Moderna or updated (2023–2024 formula) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, depending on the number of prior doses.

Parents/caregivers should consult their child's healthcare provider for dosing recommendations.

Special situations

People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised who are receiving a COVID-19 vaccine for the first time should:

- Receive a 3-dose series of either the updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna or the updated (2023–2024 formula) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised who have received COVID-19 vaccine in the past:

- Need 1 or 2 doses of the updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna or updated (2023–2024 formula) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, depending on the number of prior doses.
- Should consult their healthcare provider about dosing recommendations and may also be recommended to receive one or more additional updated (2023–2024 formula) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine doses in the future.

Please refer to the [CDC's guidance](#) for updated vaccine schedules and recommendations.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines on the same day?

- Talk to your healthcare provider about all the vaccines (e.g., COVID-19, influenza, and RSV) available this fall to help prevent respiratory illness, as well as all recommended vaccines for adults.
- You may continue to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and influenza vaccine on the same day. If you are age 60 years or older, talk to your healthcare provider about getting the RSV vaccine with other vaccines.
- It is important to check with your healthcare provider if you have questions about getting multiple vaccinations at one time.

Will my insurance cover the new COVID-19 vaccine? What if I don't have insurance? (adapted from the [Public Health Communications Collaborative](#))

- Most people can still get a COVID-19 vaccine for free.
- For people with health insurance, most plans will cover COVID-19 vaccines at no cost, although you may need to use an approved, in-network pharmacy or healthcare facility. Check with your insurance provider if you have questions.
- People without health insurance or who have health plans that do not cover the cost of COVID-19 vaccines can get a free vaccine from their local health centers, state, local, tribal, or territorial health department, and pharmacies participating in the [CDC's Bridge Access Program](#).
- Children eligible for the [Vaccines for Children Program](#) may also receive a vaccine from a provider enrolled in that program.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I recently had COVID-19 disease?

If you recently tested positive for COVID-19, you still need to stay up to date with your vaccines, but you may consider delaying your vaccine by up to three months. Reinfection with the COVID-19 virus is less likely in the weeks to months after infection.

However, you may want to get a vaccine as soon as possible depending on

- Your personal risk of severe disease
- Your risk of spreading COVID-19 disease to a loved one or close contact
- Your [local COVID-19 hospital admission levels](#)**
- The most common circulating COVID-19 variant

**Click on CDC's Tool [View county data](#) to find hospital admission levels and prevention steps by county.

Are other COVID-19 vaccines (other than mRNA vaccines) available in the United States for someone needing a booster dose?

- As of September 18, 2023, the Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine is [currently authorized](#) to be used as a booster dose in limited situations for people 18 years of age and older. **Note**, however, that unlike the updated 2023-2024 mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, which target the currently circulating coronavirus variants, the currently available Novavax COVID-19 vaccine (as of September 18, 2023), is a monovalent vaccine based on the original strain of SARS-CoV-2. An updated Novavax vaccine for 2023-24 has not been licensed by the FDA at the time of this publication.

- You may receive the currently available Novavax booster if you are unable to, or choose not to, get an updated Pfizer or Moderna vaccine if:
 - You are 18 years of age and older
 - Completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series at least 6 months ago
 - Have not gotten any other COVID-19 booster dose

Please consult a healthcare provider if you choose to receive the Novavax vaccine.

What are CDC recommendations for people who received the Novavax or Janssen (J&J) COVID-19 vaccines in the past?

People 12 years of age and older who previously received one or more doses of Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine or Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine, including those who also received any Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccine dose(s), are recommended to receive one dose of an updated (2023–2024 formula) mRNA vaccine from either Pfizer or Moderna.

Key Messages: (Adapted from [Vaccinate Your Family](#), [CDC](#) and [Public Health Communications Collaborative](#))

- COVID-19 vaccines are effective at saving and protecting lives and healthcare system dollars while also reducing healthcare resource and workforce strain. Vaccination is especially important as we head into the fall and winter, a common time when COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases circulate in high volume nationwide.
- **Everyone 6 months of age and older** – including those who are pregnant, recently pregnant or breastfeeding – should get vaccinated against COVID-19 with an updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine.
- Get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can to protect yourself and your loved ones from serious COVID-19 illness. Most of the people who have been hospitalized or who have died due to COVID-19 have been unvaccinated.
- Updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna are available in most communities as of September 15, 2023. According to the CDC, receiving multiple immunizations, such as a COVID-19 and flu vaccine, is safe and acceptable during the same vaccination appointment. Check with your healthcare provider if you have questions about getting multiple vaccinations at one time.
 - [Everyone aged 5 years and older](#) should get **1 dose of the updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine** to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.
 - [People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) may get additional doses of an updated COVID-19 vaccine and should talk to their healthcare provider.
 - [Children aged 6 months–4 years](#) may need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines to be [up-to-date](#), including at least 1 dose of updated COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your child’s healthcare provider to ensure they are fully protected.
- The updated vaccines were created to target more recently circulating variants of coronavirus. These vaccines significantly reduce the risk of developing severe COVID-19

complications and hospitalization, ultimately protecting against avoidable severe illness or death.

- People who do not have health insurance or who have health plans that do not cover the cost of COVID-19 vaccines can get a free vaccination from their local health center; state, local, tribal, or territorial health department; and pharmacies participating in the [CDC's Bridge Access Program](#).
- Children eligible for the [Vaccines for Children Program](#) may receive a COVID-19 vaccination from a provider enrolled in that program.
- **To find a vaccine near you, check**
 - [Vaccines.gov](#)
 - Your or your child's healthcare provider's office
 - Your local pharmacy's website to see if COVID-19 vaccination appointments are available
 - [Your state or local health department](#) website

Messaging Resources

From our partners:

- [Public Health Communications Collaborative](#)
- [CDC Recommendations for Providers](#)
- [Vaccinate Your Family](#)

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Better Protect Against Currently Circulating Variants. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-action-updated-mrna-covid-19-vaccines-better-protect-against-currently-circulating>

Appendix

Table A. Timeline of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations in the United States 2020 - 2023

