

VACUNAS (VACCINES) UPDATE

National Alliance for Hispanic Health



CDC RECOMMENDS RSV VACCINE FOR OLDER ADULTS

The CDC has [endorsed](#) the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendations for use of two new respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccines for individuals 60 years of age and older. This guidance is a [shared clinical decision-making recommendation](#), which means the decision about whether or not to vaccinate against RSV is left to the discretion of each individual and their healthcare provider. Both RSV vaccines from [GSK](#) and [Pfizer](#) have been approved for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

[RSV](#) is a contagious respiratory virus that causes infections of the lungs and breathing passages. Although RSV is typically associated with infants, it can also be dangerous for seniors. Older adults, particularly those with underlying health conditions, are at high risk for severe disease caused by RSV. It is estimated that approximately 60,000-160,000 older adults are hospitalized each year with RSV and around 6,000-10,000 die due to RSV infection.

These new vaccines are expected to be available for older adults this fall in advance of RSV season. [Health experts note](#) that these vaccines are a valuable tool to protect older adults against severe RSV illness during a time when numerous respiratory viruses are likely to circulate.

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FDA ADVISES VACCINE MANUFACTURERS TO UPDATE COVID-19 VACCINES FOR FALL 2023

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) [unanimously voted to recommend](#) that COVID-19 vaccines be updated to a formula targeting a currently circulating strain of the virus. The [FDA has advised](#) vaccine manufacturers to develop a monovalent COVID-19 vaccine targeting the XBB.1.5 Omicron strain. This updated vaccine will drop protection against the original COVID-19 strain since it is no longer circulating and adjust the formula to target XBB.1.5. This approach is in agreement with a [recommendation](#) from the World Health Organization that updated vaccines target an XBB Omicron strain of COVID-19. The updated vaccines are expected to be ready for use by September 2023 as part of a fall booster campaign.



COVID-19 VACCINE MANUFACTURERS WARNED AGAINST PRICE GOUGING AS VACCINES TRANSITION TO COMMERCIAL MARKET

With the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, the federal government is phasing out its COVID-19 vaccine distribution program and preparing for the transition of vaccines to the commercial market this fall. The CDC will be providing access to COVID-19 vaccines for individuals who do not have health insurance through the [Bridge Access Program for COVID-19 Vaccines and Treatments](#). The program will allow the CDC to purchase and distribute vaccines through its network of state, territorial, and local health departments. Additionally, the program will establish new partnerships with retail pharmacies that will enable them to continue offering free COVID-19 vaccines and treatments to uninsured individuals. Government officials are requesting that COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers ensure their next round of vaccines rolling out this fall be priced affordably. The Secretary of Health and Human Services [noted in a letter](#) to the CEOs of Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax that their companies received federal funding which laid the groundwork for the development of COVID-19 vaccines, so their price should be reflective of this taxpayer investment. The Secretary also noted that price gouging behavior takes advantage of the trust that individuals have placed in these companies throughout the pandemic response.

HYBRID IMMUNITY FOR OLDER ADULTS IS ASSOCIATED WITH A DECREASE IN COVID-19 INFECTIONS

A [study](#) published in the science journal Nature examined older adults who live in long-term care facilities with a median age of 82 years. Those persons who had previously been exposed to COVID-19 infections and had taken Pfizer bivalent booster vaccinations had higher protection against severe infection. The combination of having had COVID-19 and taking the Pfizer bivalent booster was associated with higher antibody titers, neutralization, and inhibition capacity. This resulted in what is referred to as hybrid immunity. Overall, the results highlight that there were fewer infections caused by the virus after two shots of the Pfizer bivalent vaccination. These data demonstrate the benefits of additional boosters for older adults, even if they have had a COVID-19 infection.



STUDY SHOWS SAFETY OF COVID-19 MRNA VACCINES IN YOUNG CHILDREN

A recent [study](#) published in the American Academy of Pediatrics found no indications of serious side effects in a review of more than 245,000 COVID-19 mRNA vaccine doses given to children aged 5 years and younger. Researchers analyzed data from the [Vaccine Safety Datalink](#), which collects patient medical information from eight health systems across the United States. The study examined patient records from June 2022 to March 2023 for both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. It's important to note that no cases of myocarditis or pericarditis occurred after vaccination among the vaccinated children 5 years of age and younger, which has emerged as a rare side effect of COVID-19 vaccination mostly in teenage or young adult men. Health experts note that these study results can provide reassurance to healthcare providers and parents on the safety of COVID-19 mRNA vaccines for young children.



CDC 2023-2024 FLU VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

At its June 21-23, 2023 meeting, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) approved [recommendations](#) for persons six months and older for the annual influenza (flu) vaccine. Small changes to the recommendations include updating the flu vaccine composition to contain an updated influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 component for the 2023-2024 flu season. The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) reviews the composition of U.S. flu vaccines each year and updates the formula as needed to best match the flu viruses that research suggests will be most common during the upcoming flu season.

The guidance for vaccination of individuals with egg allergies also changed. All individuals six months and older with egg allergies may receive any flu vaccine (egg-based or non-egg based) that is otherwise appropriate for their age and health status. Additional safety measures for individuals with egg allergies are no longer recommended for flu vaccination beyond what is recommended for any vaccine as studies have shown that [severe allergic reactions are extremely rare](#) (1.31 per million doses).

Recommendations on flu vaccination timing did not change. Most individuals should receive the flu vaccine in September and October. Pregnant individuals in their third trimester can receive the flu vaccine in July or August to ensure their child is protected from flu after birth. Flu vaccination in July or August can also be considered for children who [need two doses of the flu](#) vaccine and those who have healthcare visits during these months if another visit later for vaccination is not feasible. Preliminary data from the last flu season show that individuals who received the flu vaccination were about 40% to 70% less likely to be hospitalized due to flu illness or related complications.



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