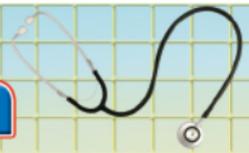


# Health Bulletin



## Updated Vaccines: How To Update Your Protection Against COVID This Fall

*From the We Can Do This*

*COVID-19 Public Education Campaign*

(NAPS)—“Been there, done that.” People are feeling like they’ve heard enough about COVID-19. But staying on top of the facts, vaccinations, and level of spread in the community is still important to keep your family and communities safe. In fact, updated vaccines that can better protect against the highly transmissible Omicron variant and its subvariants are now available in the United States.

“It’s becoming clear that COVID is going to be part of our lives for the foreseeable future,” said Dr. Michael Stevens, epidemiologist at West Virginia University Health System. “Luckily, we have free and accessible lifesaving tools to minimize the impact on people’s health. Vaccines continue to provide strong protection from the worst outcomes of COVID.”

Here is what people should know about the updated COVID vaccines:

**First, complete the primary series of a COVID vaccine.** While more than 224 million Americans have been vaccinated, many could still get protection by completing a primary series with any of the available vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, or Novavax. COVID vaccines are available to everyone age 6 months or older living in the United States at no cost.

**Updated vaccines provide extra protection.** Recently, both Pfizer and Moderna have updated their vaccines to target the Omicron strains of the COVID virus that are causing nearly all COVID infections in the United States. The updated vaccines also provide protection against the original COVID virus. Updated vaccines are available to anyone age 12 or older who has already completed the primary vaccination series. As the virus continues to change, vaccines will be updated annually to target the dominant variant.

**Updated vaccines are now available.** Updated vaccines are available for free, and they are easy and convenient to get. Tens of thousands of sites including pharmacies, doctor’s offices, community health centers, and other places have the updated vaccines available. Most people will now be able to get one COVID vaccine, once a year, each fall. Just like your annual flu shot, you should get an updated COVID vaccine sometime between Labor



**Increase your protection so that you can do more this fall.**

### **People in Washington, D.C. can combat COVID-19 with timely vaccines.**

Day and the end of October.

**It doesn’t matter how many or few boosters you’ve had before.** Anyone age 12 or older who has completed a primary series can get an updated vaccine regardless of whether they previously had zero, one, or more boosters. As long as at least two months have passed since the last dose, it is safe to get an updated vaccine.

**Community spread matters.** While being up to date on vaccinations provides the best protection from severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID, additional actions can further lower the risk of these complications, especially when COVID is increasing in your community. Paying attention to the level of COVID transmission locally can help make decisions about what actions to take. For example, when there is an increased level of spread of COVID in your community, wear a mask in public indoor spaces, regardless of whether you’ve been vaccinated.

People who have not been vaccinated against COVID are at increased risk of severe illness and death. Vaccines, including the updated COVID vaccine, provide strong protection against hospitalization and death from COVID. Vaccination also reduces the spread of COVID and the emergence of new variants, further reducing risk for the entire community, especially those most vulnerable to COVID risks. This means that everyone can stay healthier and enjoy spending time with their loved ones during this fall and upcoming holiday season.

For more information and to find a vaccine, visit [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov).