



County of Fresno
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
David Luchini, Director
Dr. Rais Vohra, Interim Health Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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NEWS RELEASE
Public Health Communication
(559) 259-1798 or (559) 974-2302

Updated COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines

Following the [FDA](#) and [CDC's](#) recent approval of the updated COVID-19 vaccines, the Fresno County Department of Public Health (FCDPH) is urging residents to protect themselves and their loved ones by getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine, when available. The recommended updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna include a monovalent (single) component that corresponds to the Omicron variant XBB.1.5. These updated COVID-19 vaccines are formulated to target currently circulating variants and prevent severe illness, such as hospitalization and death. It is anticipated that the updated COVID-19 vaccines will be available in Fresno County starting mid to late September 2023.

The updated COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months and older. The FCDPH reminds residents that older adults and individuals with weakened immune systems are at greatest risk for hospitalization and death from COVID-19 and are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated. In addition, healthy children and adults can still experience severe disease.

The FCDPH is encouraging residents to follow the updated COVID-19 vaccine timing guidelines below:

- Individuals 5 years of age and older should receive a single dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months since the last dose, regardless of their prior vaccination history.
- Children 6 months through 4 years of age should receive at least one dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine. They may need additional doses based on their prior COVID-19 vaccination history.

COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be free for most individuals through their health insurance plans, including Medi-Cal and regular health care providers. The CDC's [Bridge Access Program](#) will provide free COVID-19 vaccines to uninsured and underinsured adults through December 2024. The [Vaccines For Children \(VFC\)](#) program is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children (18 years of age and younger) who might not otherwise be vaccinated because of inability to pay.

"We tend to see rising numbers of respiratory viral infections in the fall, especially as gatherings and holiday events increase the amount of time people spend indoors with their loved ones. As we approach this fall and winter season, we ask individuals to take measurable steps to protect their health and their families," says Dr. Rais Vohra, Fresno County Interim Health Officer. "Get the updated COVID-19 vaccine along with your annual flu shot."

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The FDA anticipates that the composition of the COVID-19 vaccines may need to be updated annually, as is done for the seasonal influenza vaccine.

There are many ways Fresno County residents can get vaccinated. Please contact your primary care provider, local pharmacy, the Fresno County Department of Public Health – Immunization program at (559) 600-3550, or visit My Turn: <https://myturn.ca.gov/> to find a vaccination site near you.

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