

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy and Health Commissioner Persichilli on CDC Recommendation of COVID-19 Vaccination Boosters that Target Omicron Variant for Everyone Ages 12 and Older

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TRENTON – Individuals ages 12 and older are now able to obtain a COVID-19 bivalent booster dose, which should be received two months after their most recent booster or primary series. This updated version of COVID-19 boosters offers stronger protections against severe illness and death from Omicron sub-variants.

The recommendation

(https://urldefense.com/v3/\_https://t.e2ma.net/click/rqry0h/nrddit/b6cdlz\_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PCKTULX8zuQdTrTKEBzglv27DCrCpE6ixcd-5NrlWp-BWnGm11W01uozdEpPO1gtZGkh0BeyBZIEVNDeoO5i3bzCuB\$)by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) follows the recommendation from its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization of the Pfizer and the Moderna bivalent boosters.

New Jersey has received allocations of both Pfizer and Moderna bivalent boosters, which are being delivered to vaccine providers. Over 800 sites are expected to have bivalent booster doses in the coming days. Individuals can find locations offering the boosters on the COVID-19 Vaccine Finder and Community Calendar at covid19.nj.gov (https://urldefense.com/v3/\_https://t.e2ma.net/click/rqry0h/nrddit/ryddlz\_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PCKTULX8zuQdTrTKEBzglv27DCrCpE6ixcd-5NrlWp-BWnGm11W01uozdEpPO1gtZGkh0BeyBZIEVNDeoO5sUFMdDt\$).

As bivalent vaccines, these boosters will target both the original COVID-19 strain as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants. Omicron is currently causing most U.S. COVID-19 cases and are predicted to circulate this fall and winter as well, according to the FDA.

“As we continue to adapt our response to COVID-19 to protect public health, these new boosters have been updated to target commonly-circulating variants in order to guard individuals against severe illness this fall,” said Governor Phil Murphy. “I continue to encourage everyone to get vaccinated and to stay up to date on their boosters, as vaccines are our greatest tool in the fight against COVID-19.”

“COVID-19 vaccines have proven to be safe and effective and continue to protect against serious illness and save lives. With children back in school and the upcoming fall and winter holidays, the new bivalent vaccine will give New Jerseyans additional protections against these highly transmissible subvariants,” said Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli. “As always, if you have yet to get any COVID-19 vaccine or booster, we strongly encourage you to get one today to help protect yourself, your family and community.”

The new Pfizer bivalent booster is recommended for all individuals ages 12 and older, while the Moderna bivalent booster is recommended for those ages 18 and older. People can get the bivalent booster if it has been at least two months since they have completed their primary vaccination series or two months after they have received the most recent booster dose with any authorized or approved monovalent COVID-19 vaccine.

In its statement, the CDC said in the coming weeks, the agency also expects to recommend updated COVID-19 boosters for other pediatric groups. When data are available and FDA authorizes these other types of COVID-19 boosters, CDC will quickly move to help make them available in the United States, according to the statement.

“If you are eligible, there is no bad time to get your COVID-19 booster and I strongly encourage you to receive it,” said CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H., in the statement.

Currently, nearly 81% of New Jerseyans have completed their primary series, and more than 54% have received a first booster. COVID-19 primary series vaccines continue to be recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older, and COVID-19 boosters are recommended for every eligible individual ages 5 years and older. Going forward, bivalent boosters will be the sole version of COVID-19 boosters available to anyone ages 12 years and older.

Eligibility for all COVID-19 vaccine doses and boosters can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html (https://urldefense.com/v3/\_https://t.e2ma.net/click/rqry0h/nrddit/7qedlz\_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PCKTULX8zuQdTrTKEBzglv27DCrCpE6ixcd-5NrlWp-BWnGm11W01uozdEpPO1gtZGkh0BeyBZIEVNDeoO5r5pTnAL\$).

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