

Governor Phil Murphy

Statement from Governor Murphy and New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Persichilli on CDC Recommendation of COVID-19 Boosters that Target Omicron Variant for Everyone Ages 5 and Older

10/13/2022

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has expanded the use of the updated COVID-19 bivalent booster dose to children ages 5 through 11 years, so everyone ages 5 and older is now recommended to receive a bivalent booster dose this fall.

Children ages 5 and older can receive their COVID-19 bivalent booster dose two months after their most recent booster or the completion of their primary vaccine series. As bivalent vaccines, these boosters offer stronger protections against severe illness and death by targeting both the original COVID-19 strain as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants.

The recommendation (https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/s1012-COVID-19-Vaccines.html) by the CDC follows the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) authorization (https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-moderna-and-pfizer-biontech-bivalent-covid-19-vaccines) of updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech for children ages 5 through 11 years and from Moderna for children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years.

With yesterday's authorization, the monovalent Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is no longer authorized as a booster dose for individuals 5 through 11 years of age. Both the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine continue to be authorized for primary series administration in individuals six months of age and older.

New Jersey vaccine providers already have a supply of the Moderna bivalent boosters; pre-orders for the Pfizer bivalent vaccine were placed and will soon be available in New Jersey.

The COVID vaccines, including the updated boosters, are safe and effective. As cooler days are upon us and gatherings begin to move indoors – particularly with many holidays around the corner – we encourage all eligible individuals to get vaccinated and boosted to protect themselves, their families, and our communities at large.

We remain committed to our efforts to ensure that vaccination sites are equipped with adequate vaccine supplies and stand ready to serve the public in locations providing the greatest accessibility to our residents, especially those who are most vulnerable.

We've made significant progress in the fight against COVID-19 and can keep our loved ones and communities healthy by continuing to work together. Staying up-to-date with vaccines and boosters, including both the COVID-19 and flu vaccines, remains the best way to protect individual and public health from these infectious diseases.

We encourage individuals who are eligible for this booster to visit covid19.nj.gov/finder (https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/finder) to locate a vaccine appointment or reach out to the Vaccine Call Center at 855-568-0545 if you need assistance in finding and scheduling an appointment.

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