

COVID-19 Key Messages

Week of January 30, 2022

Updated COVID-19 Vaccine (Bivalent Booster) for Everyone 6 months+

- Federal health officials have authorized the updated COVID-19 **bivalent booster** to target the **Omicron dominant subvariants**.
- This **single-dose booster generates a stronger and broader immune response** against current and future Omicron subvariants.
 - The **Pfizer bivalent vaccine** is now authorized for people **ages 6 months to 4 years who have not yet received the third dose of their primary series**.
 - The **Moderna bivalent booster** is now authorized for people **ages 6 months to 5 years at least 2 months after completion of their primary series**.
 - **Anyone ages 5+ should receive a bivalent booster at least 2 months after completion of their primary series or last monovalent booster**.
- Now widely available across Chicago at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), a free online service to help you search for nearby locations, pharmacies, or providers offering the vaccine. You can also access [Chicago.gov/CovidVax](https://www.chicago.gov/CovidVax) or call CDPH's COVID-19 call center at **312-746-4835** for more information or to [schedule your vaccine](#).
- You can call or visit your local pharmacy's website for more information on availability. More than 130 pharmacy locations in Chicago have received the updated vaccine:
 - [CVS](#)
 - [Jewel-Osco](#)
 - [Walgreens](#)
 - [Mariano's](#)
 - [Walmart](#)
- CDPH will continue to host [Family Vaccination Clinics at City Colleges of Chicago](#) through February. These events will offer [Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines](#) with Pfizer and Moderna for children 6 months old and up and [Updated Bivalent Booster](#) doses to all eligible Chicagoans.
 - Clinics will be open from **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**
 - Registration is recommended at [Chicago.gov/COVIDvax](https://www.chicago.gov/COVIDvax). Walk-ins are also welcome as space allows.
- Find other vaccination events at [Chicago.gov/VaxCalendar](https://www.chicago.gov/VaxCalendar) – events will be added as they are confirmed.
- For frequently asked questions, please visit [Chicago.gov/Boost](https://www.chicago.gov/Boost).
- Federal health officials have advised that it is **safe to simultaneously take the COVID-19 vaccine or the updated bivalent booster with the flu shot or other vaccines**.

Vaccine status Up to date

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has streamlined that you are considered **up to date** if you have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including the newly updated bivalent booster, when eligible.
- See [CDC's vaccination schedule](#) for additional details on recommended vaccine timing by age group.

Flu vaccines

- CDPH launched its annual flu vaccination campaign encouraging Chicagoans to receive their seasonal flu shot.
- CDC and CDPH recommend that anyone **6 months or older** get the flu vaccine now.
- The co-administration of influenza and COVID-19 vaccines is safe and encouraged. Some individuals may experience arm soreness and flu-like symptoms lasting 48-72 hours after receiving either vaccine.
- To ensure that every resident of Chicago can access **flu vaccines and the updated bivalent COVID-19 booster vaccines**, CDPH has scheduled flu and COVID-19 clinics where residents can get their **free** shots.
 - **Family Vaccination Clinics at City Colleges of Chicago** will offer flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines, and the updated bivalent booster to all eligible Chicagoans. Clinics will be open from **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Registration is recommended, but walk-ins are accommodated as space allows. Upcoming clinics include:
 - Saturday, February 4 at Kennedy King College, 6301 S. Halsted St.
 - Saturday, February 11 at Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Ave.
 - **Need help finding your vaccines?** The calendar of events hosted by CDPH is updated regularly at [Chicago.gov/VaxCalendar](https://www.chicago.gov/VaxCalendar), or residents can call **312-746-4835**. Both flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are available at healthcare providers, pharmacies, and CDPH run clinics across the city and can be found at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).
- It is essential for people at higher risk of being exposed to or developing severe complications from flu **and** COVID-19 and their caregivers to get vaccinated. This includes:
 - People 50 and older account for most hospitalizations and deaths from flu and COVID-19.
 - People with underlying medical conditions like lung disease, heart disease, neurologic disorders, weakened immune systems, and diabetes are also more likely to have severe flu and COVID-19 outcomes.
 - Pregnant people and people up to 2 weeks after the end of pregnancy
 - African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Alaskan Natives are disproportionately affected by diseases like asthma, diabetes, obesity, and other chronic conditions that can increase the risk for severe flu and COVID-19 complications.
 - People who live with or care for people most vulnerable to severe flu and COVID-19 illness and death, including household contacts, caregivers in long-term care facilities, and health care personnel exposed to patients.
 - Essential workers with frequent interactions with the public are more likely to be exposed to flu and COVID-19.
- The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are **free**. No government-issued ID or insurance is required.

Chicago's COVID-19 Risk Level is LOW

- Cook County is at the Low COVID-19 Community Level based on the national metrics of the CDC.
 - The CDC's measurement of Cook County's hospitalization data for Community Levels reflects the burden on the whole federally defined Health Service Area, which includes Cook, Lake, DuPage, and McHenry Counties.
- Recommended COVID-19 mitigations:
 - Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Get tested if you are experiencing COVID-like symptoms and follow isolation guidelines staying home if you are sick.

- CDPH uses the CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) to gauge the level of risk here in Chicago.
 - CDC releases new COVID-19 Community Level data every Wednesday.
 - Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area, new COVID-19 admissions, and hospital beds used by COVID-19 patients.
 - More information is on <https://chi.gov/coviddash>.

Pediatric Respiratory Virus Surge: RSV and Flu

- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and flu cases have been affecting children at high rates across the nation.
- **Staying up to date with the COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines is the most powerful tool to combat infections, hospitalizations, and death.**
- Frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, and wearing a mask (especially if symptomatic) are also important ways to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

If your child is sick, please contact your healthcare provider immediately to check for medications. Early treatment can save lives if your child is at high risk for serious disease, children under 2 with underlying conditions, and infants six months or younger.

Protect Chicago At Home Program

- **Protect Chicago At Home**, the Chicago Department of Public Health's (CDPH) in-home vaccination program, offers the updated COVID-19 vaccine and primary doses for anyone **ages 6+ months**. **Up to 10 people can be vaccinated at a time**. Appointments for homebound individuals, those aged 65 and up, and those living in specific zip codes will be prioritized. Make an at-home appointment at [Chicago.gov/AtHome](https://chicago.gov/AtHome) or by calling **312-746-4835**.
- The **Protect Chicago At Home program** also offers flu vaccines for individuals who schedule a COVID-19 vaccine. Make an at-home appointment at [Chicago.gov/AtHome](https://chicago.gov/AtHome) or by calling 312-746-4835.
- Everyone **ages 6+ months** is eligible for at-home vaccination. Appointments are available 4 days a week, **Saturday through Tuesday – 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.**
- **Moderna and Pfizer** COVID-19 vaccines are offered for **ages 6+ months** and older.
- **The updated bivalent booster** is now available for everyone eligible.
- **Flu vaccines are also offered as long as a COVID-19 vaccine is ordered.**
- Appointments for individuals **ages 65+, the homebound, or those living in an undervaccinated zip code (list below) will be prioritized.**
- Up to 10 people can be vaccinated per household.
- Call **(312) 746-4835** to make an appointment or register at chicago.gov/athome.