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IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 Update

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Question of the Week

How does COVID-19 affect pregnancy?

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), expecting mothers, or those who were recently pregnant, are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 compared to those who are not pregnant. Pregnancy causes changes in the body that could make it easier to get very sick from respiratory viruses like the one that causes COVID-19. These changes in the body can continue after pregnancy.

For the best protection, the COVID-19 vaccination and a booster shot are recommended for those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant, or might become pregnant in the future.
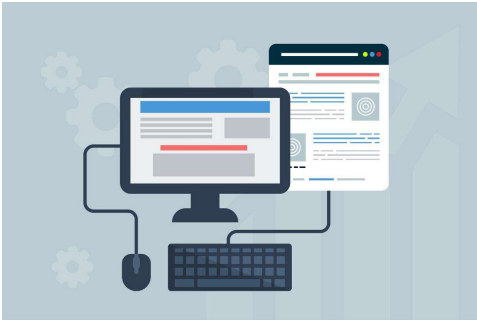
The CDC also has new resources resources/toolkit for expecting mothers and new parents. Individuals with questions can speak to someone about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy by sending questions via email to **MotherToBaby**. Experts are available to answer questions in English or Spanish by phone or chat.

Other options:
- Call 1-866-626-6847
- Chat live or send an email **MotherToBaby**.

Visit **CDC's Toolkit for Pregnant People and New Parents** for resources and tools to help pregnant and recently pregnant people, breastfeeding people and new parents caring for infants protect their health.

White House launches COVID.gov—a new one-stop-shop website providing public access to vaccines, tests, treatments, and high-quality masks

This week, the Biden Administration launched **COVID.gov**, a new website to help people access vaccines, tests, treatments, and high-quality masks. **COVID.gov** also provides people with an easy way to find the level of COVID-19 in their community. **COVID.gov** will be available in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese and is accessible for those using assistive technologies.

The Administration is making all of these COVID-19 tools available over the phone through the National Hotline at 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489), which supports over 150 languages. For individuals with disabilities who may need additional support, the Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL) is also available to help at 1-888-677-1199 or via email at **DIAL@usaginganddisability.org**.

COVID.gov also features a new Locator Tool to Help Individuals Access the Over 2,000 Test-to-Treat Sites across the country. Test-to-Treat is now available for all Veterans Affairs (VA) patients in VA clinics across the country. This program links patients who test positive with treatments that are appropriate for them is the standard of care in VA clinics. Test-to-Treat locations also are available in more than 240 federally qualified health care centers and Indian Health Service Facilities across the country, ensuring access to lifesaving treatments in some of the nation's hardest-hit and highest-risk communities.

Read more.

FDA authorizes a second booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for people 50 and older and people 12 and older with moderate or severe immunosuppression

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized an additional (second) booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines. This second booster dose is authorized for people 50 years of age and older, as well as individuals 12 years of age and older with moderate or severe immunosuppression. This second booster dose should be given at least 4 months after administration of one's first booster dose.

Moderately/severely immunosuppressed individuals aged 12-17 may receive a second booster of Pfizer vaccine while those aged 18 and up may receive either Pfizer or Moderna.

Previously, immunocompromised individuals were eligible for an additional (third) mRNA primary series dose and one booster dose (4 total doses). Now, immunocompromised individuals 12 and up are eligible for a second booster, or fifth total dose.

Following the FDA's authorization, people 50 years old and above and people 12 years old and above with moderate or severe immunosuppression are now eligible for a second booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

https://ldh.la.gov/news/6563

This authorization offers additional protection from COVID-19 to many vulnerable individuals, particularly in the event of a future surge of the virus.
- Pfizer and Moderna Vaccines: A second booster dose of both COVID-19 vaccines may be administered to individuals 50 years of age and older at least 4 months after receipt of a first booster dose of any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine.

- Pfizer Vaccine: A second booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine may be administered to individuals 12 years of age and older with moderate or severe immunosuppression at least 4 months after receipt of a first booster dose of any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine.
- Moderna Vaccine: A second booster dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine may be administered to individuals 18 years of age and older with moderate or severe immunosuppression at least 4 months after the first booster dose of any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine.

Of note:
- Moderate/severe immunosuppression refers to solid organ transplant recipients or those with comparable levels of immunosuppression, such as cancer patients receiving chemotherapy, stem cell transplant patients taking immunosuppressive medicines, primary immunodeficiency such as DiGeorge syndrome and Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, advanced or untreated HIV infection, active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other immunosuppressive drugs, and other conditions or treatments.
- Pfizer booster doses are full-strength while Moderna booster doses are typically half the strength of Moderna primary series doses. Please pay close attention to vial packaging.

mRNA booster dose for Johnson & Johnson also approved

In addition, based on **newly published data**, adults who received a primary vaccine and booster dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine at least 4 months ago may now receive a second booster dose using an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna)

Information to support authorization of a second COVID-19 booster dose

The FDA has determined that the known and potential benefits of a second COVID-19 vaccine booster dose outweigh the known and potential risks in these populations. The evidence considered for authorization of a second booster dose following primary vaccination and a first booster dose included safety and immune response information provided to the agency as well as additional information on effectiveness submitted by the companies.
The guidance in this HAN is effective immediately.

Related Information
- **CDC statement on FDA's authorization of second booster doses**
- **FDA Fact Sheets and other documents for Pfizer vaccine**
- **FDA Fact Sheets and other documents for Moderna vaccine**
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Overview**
- **Emergency Use Authorization for Vaccines Explained**

Providers reminded to report adverse events

LDH reminds providers to report possible vaccine-related adverse events to the FDA/CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) at **https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html** or by calling 1-800-822-7967.
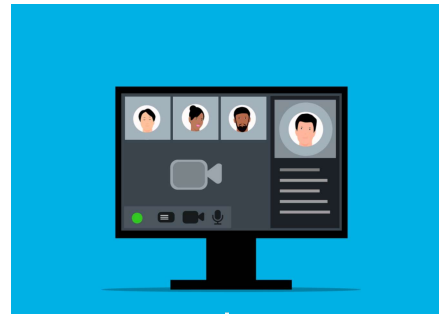
Any possible severe adverse events (those resulting in hospitalization, death, or persistent disability) should be immediately reported to the Office Public Health (OPH) Infectious Disease/Epidemiology Hotline at 1-800-256-2748.

If you have vaccine-related questions, please contact **la.immunization@la.gov**.

Any member of the public with questions on COVID-19 testing, therapeutics, vaccines, or other related issues can call the Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline at 1-855-453-0774.

Weekly Pfizer webinars for healthcare providers

Healthcare providers can participate in weekly **Pfizer webinars** for continuing education. Training is offered three times a week with the goal of educating providers and immunization staff personnel on the proper use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Webinars are formatted to take place in two sessions. The first session will focus on medical updates and new information. The second session will focus on storage, handling and administration of the vaccine. These sessions will be updated to reflect the latest information and recent changes which will be identified at the start of each session.

Click here for a complete schedule of trainings and to access links and passwords for each course.

Good Reads

- **COVID hospitalizations fall below 100 in Louisiana for the first time | Local Politics**

- **Louisiana made it harder to sue health care providers during COVID. A lawsuit challenges that.**

- **Infectious Omicron BA.2 now dominant in U.S., with coronavirus spring rise likely**

- **U.S. officials aren't ready to declare COVID over despite lifting measures**

- **COVID treatments and testing no longer free for uninsured patients after federal funding runs out**

- **Who really needs a second COVID booster? Here's what to know**

GET THE FACTS

COVID-19 SUPPORT HOTLINE:

855-453-0774

Monday - Saturday 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Sunday 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Learn more at covidvaccine.la.gov

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Submit a Question of the Week

Do you have a frequently asked question that you would like to submit or have answered in the QOW?

SUBMIT HERE