

IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 Update

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Question of the Week



Since the pandemic is over, my kids can go trick-or-treating, right?

First, the pandemic is not over, and it is still important to take common-sense precautions. Remember the mantra we learned throughout the pandemic when it comes to holiday celebrations, “outside is safer.”

This is very easy to do on Halloween because trick-or-treating generally involves plenty of outdoor time. However, that does not mean it is totally risk-free. Here are some more tips for staying COVID-safe this Halloween.

Stay home if you're sick. Skip the Halloween party if you aren't feeling well.

Get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms.

Take precautions in crowded or indoor events, as informed by your parish's COVID-19 Community Level. This means to wear a high-quality mask (Halloween masks don't count). Consider making the mask part of the costume—like a doctor, nurse, ninja or cowboy.

When hosting celebrations, review options for improving ventilation in your home. This can help you reduce virus particles in your home and keep COVID-19 from spreading.

Keep your hands clean. Bring hand sanitizer when you go out trick-or-treating. Wash your hands frequently when you are giving out candy.

The best way to protect yourself and others from severe illness from COVID-19 on Halloween (and every day) is to stay up to date on your COVID-19 vaccinations.

Breaking News: CDC allows Novavax monovalent COVID-19 boosters for adults ages 18 and older

On Wednesday, CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H., gave approval to allow Novavax monovalent COVID-19 boosters for adults.

This action gives people ages 18 years and older the option to receive a Novavax monovalent booster instead of an updated (bivalent) Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna booster if they have completed primary series vaccination but have not previously received a COVID-19 booster—and if they cannot or will not receive mRNA vaccines.

Some may be unable to receive an mRNA vaccine as a result of an allergy to a component of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, or as a result of a history of a severe allergic reaction (such as anaphylaxis) after a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, or a lack of availability of an mRNA vaccine. People ages 18 and older may also choose to receive a Novavax monovalent booster if they are unwilling to receive mRNA vaccines, and would otherwise not receive a booster dose.

[See this link](#) for updated Clinical Considerations.

Research: 4 in 10 misrepresented their COVID status

Over 40 percent of U.S. residents have misled others on either their COVID-19 vaccination status or how they followed public health guidelines, according to a new study. In a survey of 1,733 U.S. adults conducted in December 2021, researchers found 42 percent of participants admitted to either not adhering or misrepresenting how they were adhering to COVID-19 protocols.

Summary Findings:

A survey of over 1,700 people found that 42 percent admitted to lying about their vaccination status or adherence to COVID-19 public health safety measures.

Some of the respondents admitted to misleading others about their adherence to COVID-19 health protocols because “they didn’t think COVID was real.”

Twenty-five percent of respondents said they told someone that they were taking more COVID-19 preventative measures than they were.

Another 22 percent admitted to breaking COVID-19 quarantine rules.

About 21 percent said they avoided getting tested for COVID-19 when they thought they might have the virus; and

Twenty percent said they lied about knowing they had the virus when screened to enter a clinician's office.

Findings from the survey were recently published in the online medical journal *JAMA Network Open*. Read more from *The Hill* [here](#).

TikTok and Twitter are most-used misinformation platforms

Posts spreading misinformation are amplified most on Twitter and TikTok, according to a new report that looked at the spread of false narratives online.

The [Integrity Institute](#), an advocacy group, found that Twitter and TikTok have the highest "Misinformation Amplification Factor," a figure the report's authors used to track the spread of misinformation.

The report identified the highest number of misinformation posts on Facebook, based on the sample analyzed. Interestingly, posts on Facebook with misinformation are amplified to a lesser degree than on Twitter and TikTok because Facebook's sharing option has what the report called a higher level of "friction."

CDC expands updated COVID-19 vaccines to Include children ages 5–11

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has approved the expanded use of the updated (bivalent) COVID-19 vaccines to children ages 5 through 11 years.

This follows the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) authorization of updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech for children ages 5 through 11 years, and those from Moderna for children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years.

Updated COVID-19 vaccines help to restore protection that has waned since previous vaccination and help to fight off a wider range of variants.

These are critical next steps forward in our country's vaccination program—a program that has helped provide increased protection against severe COVID-19 disease and death. Read more [here](#).

Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines including boosters

Updated (bivalent) boosters are available. CDC recommends everyone stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines for their age group:

- **Children and teens ages 6 months–17 years**
- **Adults ages 18 years and older**

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from COVID-19 infection provides added protection against COVID-19.

- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised have [different recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Getting vaccines if you had or currently have COVID-19

If you recently had COVID-19, you may consider delaying your next vaccine dose (whether a primary dose or booster) by three months from when your symptoms started or, if you had no symptoms, when you first received a positive test.

Reinfection is less likely directly after infection. However, immunity decreases over time, and certain factors might be reasons to get vaccinated sooner, including risk of severe disease for yourself or a loved one, local [COVID-19 Community Level](#), and current common [COVID-19 variants](#).

Find out when you can get your booster

Boosters are recommended for most people and are an important part of protecting yourself from getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19. Use this [tool](#) from CDC to determine when or if you (or your child) can get one or more COVID-19 boosters. Do not use it to diagnose or treat COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing: What you need to know now

When you get tested for COVID-19:

- Make sure to test at the right time.
- Choose the right type of test for your circumstance.
- Follow test directions as recommended by FDA to be sure your test results are correct.

Learn where testing locations are located in your community: [Community-Based Testing Sites for COVID-19 | HHS.gov](#).

If you test positive, contact your healthcare provider, health department, or community health center to learn about [treatment options](#). If you don't have timely access to a healthcare provider, find a [Test to Treat location](#) in your community. Learn more [here](#).

COVID-19 Community Levels

As of October 13, 2022, there are 67 (2.1%) counties, districts, or territories with a high COVID-19 Community Level, 583 (18.1%) counties with a medium Community Level, and 2,567 (79.7%) counties with a low Community Level.

Compared with the previous week, this represents a minor decrease (-0.8 percentage points) in the number of high-level counties, a moderate decrease (-2.2 percentage points) in the number of medium-level counties, and a moderate increase (+3.0 percentage points) in the number of low-level counties.

To check COVID-19 Community Levels in Louisiana, [visit the COVID Data Tracker](#). To learn the recommended prevention measures based on your area's COVID-19 Community Level, visit [COVID-19 Community Level and COVID-19 Prevention](#).

Updated COVID-19 Vaccination Social Media Toolkit

The Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) has updated their [COVID-19 Vaccination Social Media Toolkit](#) with messages about bivalent boosters and co-administration from the existing Vaccine Access and Training (VAT) project.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)-funded VAT project provides resources to address disparities in COVID-19 vaccination coverage among racial and ethnic minority adults. The messages and images in this toolkit have been specifically developed based on feedback from community health workers in Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, and Texas and may be applicable in your communities.

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