Health Advisory:
Updated 2023–24 COVID-19 Vaccine

October 26, 2023

Situational Update

FDA has updated its authorizations for COVID-19 vaccination to protect against severe COVID-19 illness due to the currently circulating variants, and CDC has recommended that an updated vaccine is received by everyone age 6 months and older. Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax vaccines now consist of a single strain corresponding to the Omicron variant XBB.1.5 of SARS-CoV-2. Bivalent mRNA vaccines and the prior Novavax formulation have been de-authorized and are no longer available.

Administer an updated monovalent 2023–24 formulation of COVID-19 vaccines to all individuals aged 6 months and older.

Updated fact sheets for healthcare providers and vaccine recipients have been published in several languages for the Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax products.

Manufacturers are distributing the updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccines to pharmacies, clinics, medical offices, health systems, and local health departments; some initial deliveries were delayed but the supply has been stabilizing.

COVID-19 vaccine has been “commercialized” this fall, such that pharmacies and healthcare providers must purchase doses of updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine for their insured patients from an authorized distributor. Doses and administration will then be reimbursable by insurers with zero or minimal patient share of cost in most cases.

For uninsured patients, the federal Bridge Access Program (BAP) is providing no-cost doses to retail pharmacies to administer; the BAP is also supplying SFPDH with a small number of no-cost doses for distribution to federally qualified health centers and other entities directly serving the city’s uninsured populations.

Actions Requested of SF Providers

1. Purchase updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine for use with insured patients or refer them to pharmacies where they can access the vaccine. As budget allows, purchase updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine for administration to your uninsured patients as well or refer them to pharmacies where they can receive a free BAP dose.
2. Order updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine from the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program for all your VFC-eligible patients ages 18 years and under.

3. Educate and strongly recommend your patients aged 6 months and older this fall to be vaccinated with the updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine.

4. Protect your patients against RSV and influenza:
   
a. Educate and strongly recommend your patients age 6 months and older to receive the 2023–24 influenza vaccine. Those age 65 years and up should receive one of three flu vaccine formulations (Fluad, Flublok, or Fluzone High-Dose) if available.

   b. Implement CDC RSV vaccination recommendations for infants ages 0–19 months, pregnant people at 32–36 weeks gestation, and older adults ages 60 years and up. SFDPH will publish a separate advisory to detail recommendations for active and passive RSV immunization among these groups.

Clinical Guidance for Use of Updated 2023–24 COVID-19 Vaccines

CDC has updated its COVID-19 vaccination guidance as follows.

CDC recommends that everyone age 6 months and older should receive the updated 2023–24 formula COVID-19 vaccine.

- Individuals 6 months through 4 years of age who have previously been vaccinated are recommended to receive 1 or 2 doses of a homologous (same brand) updated mRNA vaccine, depending on history and timing of previous COVID-19 vaccine doses. Those who received all doses in the initial vaccination series should receive 1 dose of a homologous updated 2023–24 mRNA vaccine.

- Unvaccinated individuals 6 months through 4 years of age are recommended to receive 3 homologous doses of the 2023–24 Pfizer vaccine or 2 homologous doses of the 2023–24 Moderna vaccine.

- Individuals 5 through 11 years of age, regardless of previous vaccination, are recommended to receive 1 dose of a 2023–24 Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccine.

- Individuals 12 years of age and older who have previously been vaccinated are recommended to receive 1 dose of a 2023–24 Pfizer, Moderna, or Novavax vaccine.

- Unvaccinated individuals 12 years of age and older are recommended to receive 1 dose of a 2023–24 Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or a 2-dose series of the 2023–24 Novavax vaccine separated by a 3- to 8-week interval.

- An updated COVID-19 vaccine dose can be given at least 2 months after the last dose of any formulation of COVID-19 vaccine.
• **Individuals 6 months of age and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised:**
  - If unvaccinated, should receive a 2- or 3-dose primary series of age-appropriate updated 2023–24 Moderna, Pfizer, or Novavax COVID-19 vaccine.
  - If previously vaccinated, the number of recommended doses 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine needed depends on the individual’s age and the number and brand of any previous doses. See the infographics from [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) or [CDPH](https://www.cdph.ca.gov).
  - Have the option to receive 1 additional dose of an age-appropriate 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months following the last 2023–24 vaccine dose or series. Beyond that, further additional doses may be administered based on shared clinical decision-making with a healthcare provider at least 2 months after the last updated 2023–24 vaccine dose.

• **Persons 65 years of age and older**, unless moderately or severely immune compromised, do not yet have the option to receive more than 1 dose of updated 2023–24 COVID-19 mRNA vaccine; CDC may reconsider this option later in the season.

• Most presentations of the updated 2023–24 COVID-19 vaccines are single-dose and require no dilution. Exceptions are the Pfizer formulation for ages 6 months through 4 years (single-dose vial, dilution required), and the Novavax formulation (5-dose vial, no dilution required).

• Any updated 2023–24 vaccine formulation may be administered *concomitantly* with influenza and RSV vaccines to eligible individuals.

**Additional Resources**

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) offers helpful job aids at [EZIZ.org/covid](https://www.eziz.org/covid).

- [IMM-1396](https://www.cdph.ca.gov) summarizes vaccine timing and dose presentation guidance, by age bracket, for persons with and without moderate-to-severe immunocompromise.

- [IMM-1399](https://www.cdph.ca.gov) details all available dose presentations and storage and handling guidance for COVID-19 vaccine products.

CDC offers helpful [vaccine schedules and infographics](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) as well as [standing orders, labels, and by-use-dates (BUD)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) for updated COVID-19 vaccine products.

See the SFDPH page for [COVID-19 vaccination resources](https://www.sfhealth.org) in San Francisco.