



Flu, RSV, and COVID-19 Vaccinations – Holiday Guidance ODP Announcement 24-113

AUDIENCE:

All interested Parties

PURPOSE:

To promote health and safety by providing current vaccine information and helpful reminders about holiday gatherings.

To remind Office of Developmental Programs' (ODP) providers of the expectation to support individuals to access all available and recommended vaccinations.

DISCUSSION:

As the holiday season approaches, remember to protect yourself and others by staying up to date with your COVID-19, RSV, and flu vaccines.

You may be eligible to receive your flu and RSV vaccine at the same time as a recommended COVID-19 vaccine. Your healthcare practitioner, including your pharmacist, can help you determine if it is appropriate to receive these vaccines at the same time.

Flu Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that everyone 6 months and older get a flu vaccine every flu season with rare exceptions. Vaccination is particularly

important for people who are at higher risk of serious [complications from influenza](#). A full listing of [people at higher risk of developing Flu-related complications](#) is available.

RSV Vaccine

The CDC recommends RSV vaccines for all adults ages 75 and older and adults ages 60 – 74 who are at [increased risk for severe RSV](#). There are two immunizations recommended to protect infants from severe RSV: a maternal RSV vaccine (Pfizer's Abrysvo) given during pregnancy, or an RSV antibody given to infants after birth.

COVID-19 Vaccine

ODP expects that providers will ensure that all individuals supported have timely opportunities to remain up to date with COVID-19 vaccination as defined by the CDC.

This not only protects individuals' health, safety, and welfare – it also supports individuals to make choices about when, where, and how to receive needed services in accordance with § 6100.182(k). Providers are reminded of the need to offer vaccination opportunities in a language and means of communication understood by the individual or a person designated by the individual as specified at § 6100.50.

Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccination is important for maximum protection. A person is [up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccines when they have received all recommended doses, including at least 1 dose of the 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccine.

People ages 65 years and older, vaccinated under the routine schedule, are recommended to receive 2 doses of any 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccine (i.e., Moderna, Novavax, or Pfizer-BioNTech) separated by 6 months (minimum interval 2 months) regardless of vaccination history, with one exception: Unvaccinated people who initiate vaccination with the 2024–2025 Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine are recommended to receive 2 doses of Novavax followed by a third dose of any COVID-19 vaccine 6

months (minimum interval 2 months) later.

A person is still up to date if they receive all COVID-19 vaccine doses recommended for them and then become ill with COVID-19. They do not need to be immediately revaccinated or receive an additional dose.

The CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccination for everyone ages 6 months and older in the United States for the prevention of COVID-19. Vaccination is especially important for people at highest risk of severe COVID-19, including people ages 65 years and older; people with [underlying medical conditions](#), including immunocompromised; people living in long-term care facilities; and pregnant people to protect themselves and their infants.

Your healthcare practitioner, including your pharmacist, can help you determine if you are up to date with your vaccines.

Help Stop the Spread This Holiday Season

If you're planning to travel or gather with loved ones this holiday season, here are the core prevention strategies to maximize your chances of staying safe and healthy from COVID-19.

- **Stay up to date with [COVID-19 vaccines](#).**
 - Although vaccinated people sometimes get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines significantly lowers the risk of getting very sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19.
 - Use the [vaccine provider map](#) to locate a provider near you who has the

vaccine. Contact the provider of your choice to coordinate vaccinations.

- If you are unable to locate a vaccine provider that can support you appropriately, please contact ra-pwodpemrgncyrspq@pa.gov.
- To support individuals in making an informed decision on receiving vaccines, these [social stories](#) provide a visual explanation of what to expect when getting the vaccine for COVID-19 and what you may experience afterwards. The social stories are provided in both English and Spanish and have also been developed into videos.
- Practice good [hygiene](#) (practices that improve cleanliness).
- Take [steps for cleaner air](#).
- **When you are sick:**
 - Use [precautions to prevent spread](#), including staying home and away from others (including people you live with who are not sick) if you have respiratory symptoms.
 - Learn when you can [go back to your normal activities](#).
 - Seek health care promptly for [testing](#) and/or [treatment](#) if you have [risk factors for severe illness](#). Treatment may help lower your risk of severe illness, but it needs to be started within a few days of when your symptoms begin.

Additional Prevention Strategies

In addition, there are other prevention strategies that you can choose to further protect

yourself and others.

- [Wearing a mask](#) and [putting distance between yourself and others](#) can help lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- [Testing for COVID-19](#) can help you decide what to do next, like getting [treatment](#) to reduce your risk of severe illness and [taking steps](#) to lower your chances of spreading COVID-19 to others.
- These [resources](#) are provided to support situations when it is necessary to teach infection control skills or provide information about COVID-19.

Wash Your Hands

- In these [two videos](#), Milestone HCQU West provides tips and tools on when to wash hands to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Washing your hands is one of the most important steps you can take in staying healthy. When you wash, make sure you follow these steps:
 - Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them. Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations.
 - Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
 - Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
 - Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the

"Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

Don't Touch Your Face

- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

Clean Surfaces

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces — especially when someone is ill.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[Flu \(pa.gov\)](#)

[Who Needs a Flu Vaccine | CDC](#)

[Flu Symptoms & Complications | CDC](#)

[People at Higher Risk of Flu Complications | CDC](#)

[Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters | CDC](#)

[Vaccines.gov - Find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you](#)

[Coronavirus in Pennsylvania \(pa.gov\)](#)

QUESTIONS:

Questions about this announcement may be directed to: [ra-
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