

Five things to know about getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine

... from Premera Blue Cross



The time has come to get your updated COVID-19 vaccine. With more cases starting to pop up, now is the best time to get protected from the new variants. But with new vaccines come new questions. Keep reading to get answers to some of the most common questions about why, how, and where to get your updated COVID vaccine.

1

Who should get the updated COVID-19 vaccine?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends at least one dose of an updated mRNA COVID vaccine (the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines) this year for those ages five and up.

For those ages six months through four years, who may be getting their COVID vaccines for the first time, two doses of a Moderna vaccine or three doses of a Pfizer vaccine, with at least one of the doses being an updated 2023 vaccine are recommended.

People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should have already received a total of at least two doses of the COVID vaccine. This year, they should get a third dose and ensure that it is an updated 2023-2024 shot.

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2 How much will the updated COVID vaccine cost me?

Under the terms of the Affordable Care Act, people with commercial health insurance plans through the government or their employer can receive vaccines at no cost. When you arrive for your vaccination appointment, be sure to have your insurance card.

3 Should I get both a flu vaccine and a COVID vaccine?

The CDC recommends that anyone eligible get both the updated shots by the end of October, when the flu season usually begins. Also, for those that are immunocompromised, pregnant, or very young, the RSV vaccine is highly encouraged. Talk with your provider to determine whether you should receive multiple vaccines at once, or if you should stagger your shots, and which vaccines are right for you.

4 Where and when should I get the COVID vaccine?

Most pharmacies and many provider offices are already offering the most up-to-date COVID and flu vaccines. Log in to your [Premiera.com](https://www.premiera.com) account and use the Find Care tool, or use the [Find a Doctor](#) tool, and select Other Services to determine if a pharmacy is in your healthcare network. For most pharmacies, you can schedule your appointments online. As for timing, please note that most vaccines take one to two weeks to become fully effective. If you plan on traveling or visiting others, you may want to consider getting your shots at least two weeks before your visit or travel is scheduled. If you plan on traveling for the holidays, the sooner you and your family can get their vaccines, the better!

5 What if I have symptoms of COVID-19? Where can I get tested?

You can use an at-home test to see if you have COVID-19. You can order free tests again through the federal government at [covid.gov/tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests). Your provider office or local pharmacy can also screen you for COVID-19. If you have tests at home, please note that the expiration dates for many at-home COVID-19 tests have been extended. You can check expiration dates for at-home tests at [covid.gov/tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests).

Getting educated is the first step in making a well-informed decision about your health. Get more information about [how to](#) get the updated vaccine [here](#).