



# Health Alert Network Message 21-43: Updates on COVID-19 Vaccine Administration, Presentation, Ordering, and Enrollment

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May 21, 2021

Revision Dates (List All Revision Dates):

**DATE:** May 21, 2021

**TO:** All COVID-19 Vaccine Providers and Provider Sites

**SUBJECT:** Updates on COVID-19 Vaccine Administration, Presentation, Ordering, and Enrollment

## Key Points

- COVID-19 vaccines may be administered simultaneously with other vaccines.
- The FDA has authorized undiluted, thawed Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine vials to be stored in the refrigerator at 2°C to 8°C (35°F to 46°F) for up to one month.
- CDC considers any instance of vaccination delay for an individual to be a missed opportunity. Providers will not be penalized by the state if some unavoidable vaccine wastage occurs.
- Provider enrollment is open and the state encourages all providers to enroll!
- The vial volume of Moderna COVID-19 vaccines will soon be increasing to 13 to 15 doses.

## Co-administration of COVID-19 vaccines with other vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines may now be administered without regard to timing. This includes simultaneous administration of COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines on the same day, as well as co-administration within 14 days. It is unknown whether reactogenicity of COVID-19 vaccine is increased with co-administration, including with other vaccines known to be more reactogenic, such as adjuvanted vaccines or live vaccines. However, extensive experience with non-COVID-19 vaccines has demonstrated that immunogenicity and adverse event profiles are generally similar when vaccines are administered simultaneously as when they are administered alone.

When deciding whether to co-administer another vaccine(s) with COVID-19 vaccines, providers should consider whether the patient is behind or at risk of becoming behind on recommended vaccines, their risk of vaccine-preventable disease (e.g., during an outbreak or occupational exposures), and the reactogenicity profile of the vaccines. If multiple vaccines are administered at a single visit, administer each injection in a different injection site. For adolescents and adults, the deltoid muscle can be used for more than one intramuscular injection.

Best practices for multiple injections include:

- Label each syringe with the name and the dosage (amount) of the vaccine, lot number, the initials of the preparer, and the exact beyond-use time, if applicable.

- Separate injection sites by 1 inch or more, if possible.
- Administer the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccines that may be more likely to cause a local reaction (e.g., tetanus-toxoid-containing and adjuvanted vaccines) in different limbs, if possible.

For more information about co-administration of COVID-19 and other vaccines, *specifically* for Pfizer vaccine with *minors ages 12 and up*, please see the CDC's [Pediatric Healthcare Professionals COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit](#) and the American Academy of Pediatrics' [COVID-19 Vaccines in Children and Adolescents Policy Statement](#).

### **Pfizer Storage and Handling Update**

Pfizer Inc. submitted data to the FDA to support storage of undiluted, thawed vials of its COVID-19 vaccine at refrigerator temperatures, 2°C to 8°C (35°F to 46°F), for up to one month. This change should make this vaccine more widely available to the American public by facilitating the ability of vaccine providers, such as community doctors' offices, to receive, store, and administer the vaccine. Previously, thawed, undiluted vaccine vials could be stored in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. However, providers should always be aware of the expiration date of the vaccine, as it may expire before the 30-day storage allowance. With this new extended refrigeration timeframe, providers now have the option to store the frozen undiluted vaccine for up to 14 days at frozen temperatures between 25°C and -15°C (-13°F to 5°F), then move the vials to refrigerated temperatures for up to a month, as they administer vaccinations.

For more information, please see Pfizer's updated [Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers Administering Vaccine](#), the [FDA announcement regarding its authorization for refrigerator storage](#), and CDC's guidance on the [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

### **Protocols for Expiring Vaccine and Vaccine Loss**

The state reminds providers to go ahead and vaccinate individuals at the time they are presenting for COVID-19 vaccination. Providers should not delay the vaccination of any individual due to the fact that you may not have enough appointments set to exhaust all vaccine remaining in a punctured or mixed vial. Both the state and CDC consider any instance of vaccination delay for an individual to be a *missed opportunity*. Providers will *not* be penalized by the state if some unavoidable vaccine wastage occurs due to the provider being unable to find enough individuals, within the time the vials are usable at room temperature to administer all doses in the vial. Providers should still make every good-faith attempt to administer all doses from any vial that has been pierced or mixed, before discarding.

If your facility is concerned about wastage, please contact the Immunization Consultant in your region if you have vaccine doses in inventory that you will have difficulty administering before their expiration. Consultants may be able assist with locating another provider that would be willing to receive and administer the expiring vaccines. The contact information for your regional consultant can be found on the [LINKS homepage](#).

## **Provider Enrollment in the COVID-19 Vaccine Program**

The Louisiana Department of Health's Immunization Program is encouraging all Louisiana providers to enroll in the COVID-19 Vaccine Program. Currently, only about 35% of Louisiana's eligible population has been fully vaccinated, ranking Louisiana among the lowest in the country. Research has shown that people most trust their own doctor for information about COVID-19 and vaccines, making providers an essential part in bringing back Louisiana one vaccine at a time.

To enroll, please download and complete the [CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement](#) form, then email the completed form to [EnrollLA.LINKS@La.gov](mailto:EnrollLA.LINKS@La.gov). A confirmation email will be sent within 24 hours after submission; the enrollment process takes roughly two weeks following submission of the Provider Agreement. Doses can be ordered in LINKS in increments of six doses for Pfizer, ten doses for Moderna, and five doses for Johnson & Johnson. If you have additional questions on the provider agreement, LDH has created a [COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement FAQ](#) document for clinic staff to reference. Providers can also send any questions related to the enrollment form and LINKS to For general COVID-19 questions, please email [LA.immunization@LA.gov](mailto:LA.immunization@LA.gov).

## **New Presentation of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine**

The Moderna vaccine will soon be available to Louisiana providers in a new maximum 15 dose vial. The vial will remain the same size as the 10-dose vial but will be filled to the higher volume. A new NDC has been issued for the larger volume Moderna vial, which has been given a range of 13 to 15 doses in the EUA. The Moderna larger volume vial may contain 15 0.5mL doses of vaccine, but it will not always be possible to extract the 15th 0.5mL dose; an un-extracted 15th dose does *not* count as waste.

Until the larger volume vials become available for ordering, providers participating in the state's COVID-19 Program will *continue to order and receive the 10 dose vials* as the state continues to work through the existing allocation of the smaller 10 dose vial presentation.

More details on the new larger volume presentation of Moderna vaccine will be coming soon.