

COVID-19 UPDATES

Vaccine Updates

Updated Information on Pfizer-BioNTech Vials:

The FDA [posted](#) an updated letter of authorization, health care provider fact sheet and frequently asked questions regarding the number of Pfizer-BioNTech doses in a vial. These updates are consistent with previous FDA advice that it would be acceptable to use every full dose obtainable (the sixth, or possibly even a seventh) from each vial, pending resolution of the issue. However, since the vaccine does not contain preservative, it is critical to note that any further remaining product that does not constitute a full dose should not be pooled from multiple vials to create one.

The Doctor Is In:

U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams [released a new video](#) answering a common COVID-19 question – how many shots of the vaccine are needed? Over the next few weeks, the Surgeon General will be releasing videos answering the most common COVID-19 questions.

Vaccine Surveillance:

FDA Commissioner Dr. Stephen Hahn [explains in a new video](#) how all vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccines, must adhere to specific FDA guidelines for safety, including ongoing surveillance.

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination:

CDC updated [FAQS about COVID-19 vaccination](#).

What to Expect at Your Vaccine Appointment:

Because COVID-19 is a new disease with new vaccines, you may have questions about [what happens before, during, and after your appointment to get vaccinated](#). These tips will help you know what to expect when you get vaccinated, what information your provider will give you, and resources you can use to monitor your health after you are vaccinated.

COVID-19 Vaccination Considerations for Persons with Underlying Medical Conditions:

Adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. mRNA [COVID-19 vaccines may be administered to people with underlying medical conditions](#) provided they have not had [a severe allergic reaction](#) to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. The following information aims to help people in the groups listed below make an informed decision about receiving the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

Testing and Treatment

Medical Device Shortages During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency:

On Dec. 23, the FDA updated the Device Shortage List on our web page that lists [Medical Device Shortages During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#). Specifically, the FDA added the following device types in the testing supplies and equipment category: pipette tips (product codes LXG and PPM) and micro pipettes (product code JRC). The FDA also added clarifying notes and links to more resources in the “Additional Information” column, as well as adding clarity to the categories, such as grouping gloves under “Personal Protective Equipment – Gloves.” The device shortage list reflects the categories of devices the FDA has determined to be in shortage at this time, and the FDA will continue to update the list as the COVID-19 public health emergency evolves. In addition, the FDA is posting a new web page, [Supplies of Medical Devices for COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Testing Updates:

As of Dec. 28, 309 tests and sample collection devices are authorized by the FDA under emergency use authorizations (EUAs). These include 235 molecular tests and sample collection devices, 63 antibody tests, and 11 antigen tests. There are 32 molecular

authorizations that can be used with home-collected samples. There is one molecular prescription at-home test, one antigen prescription at-home test, and one over-the-counter (OTC) at-home antigen test.

PPE

Summary of N95 Respirator Strategies:

This summary is intended to help healthcare facilities [optimize supplies of disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirators](#) when there is limited supply during the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategies are categorized in a continuum of care and further organized according to the hierarchy of controls.

Optimizing the Supply of PPE in Healthcare Facilities:

This quick reference summarizes [CDC's strategies to optimize personal protective equipment \(PPE\) supplies in healthcare settings](#) and provides links to CDC's full guidance documents on optimizing supplies which provide additional strategies and details. These strategies offer a continuum of options using the framework of surge capacity when PPE supplies are stressed, running low, or absent.

Information for Specific Populations

Support for Veterans:

Veterans may experience worry or anxiety about their risk for contracting COVID-19 or about their ability to get recommended care. Fear or concern about the impact of COVID-19 on physical health and daily life may contribute to the onset of or worsen existing mental health problems. CDC has updated [resources for veterans during COVID-19](#).

Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for COVID-19:

CDC updated interim guidelines for healthcare providers and local and state health departments on [collecting, handling, and testing clinical specimens](#) for COVID-19.

Considerations for Events and Gatherings:

CDC updated information on [how to plan various size gatherings](#) during COVID-19 to enhance the protection of individuals and communities.

Considerations for Community-Based Organizations:

As some [community-based organizations \(CBOs\)](#) begin to resume or increase their level of activities, CDC offers the following considerations for ways these organizations can help protect individuals and communities and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Considerations for Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities:

CDC updated information on preventing the spread of COVID-19 in [retirement communities and independent living facilities](#).

Colleges, Universities, and Higher Learning:

CDC updated information for [colleges and universities](#) to plan, prepare, and respond to COVID-19.

New Year's Eve Gatherings:

As COVID-19 cases rise, the [safest choice this New Year](#) is staying home. Celebrate with the people you live with by watching a livestreamed firework display, concert, or other New Year's programming from home.