

IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 Update

May 5, 2022 | Issue 58

Stay informed about Covid variants



ALPHA
B.1.1.7



BETA
B.1.351



GAMMA
P.1



DELTA
B.1.617.2



OMICRON
B.1.1.529



Question of the Week

What should patients know about SARS-CoV-2 variants?

Viruses change and mutate frequently, as is the case with SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, and its Omicron variant. CDC monitors the changes on a regular basis along with scientists who both monitor and classify variants. Scientists also evaluate existing tests to determine their effectiveness against emerging variants.

What patients need to know about variants:

- Protecting yourself and others can help slow the spread and slow the emergence of new variants.
- The Omicron variant spreads faster than the original SARS-CoV-2 strain that causes COVID.

- LDH and public health officials continue to work with the CDC to monitor all variants, including Omicron.
- Vaccination can reduce one's risk of illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. Staying current on boosters adds additional protection.
- The CDC continues to monitor the Omicron variant and its potential impact on hospitalizations.

[Learn more.](#)



FDA announces virtual meeting schedule regarding COVID-19 vaccines

The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) plans to hold three virtual meetings in June 2022 regarding COVID-19 vaccines. The meetings are tentatively scheduled pending the receipt of anticipated and completed submissions of emergency use authorization requests (EUA) that have been publicly announced by COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers.

In the event that the FDA receives the completed submissions in a timely manner with data supporting "a clear path forward" following FDA evaluation, the FDA will move expeditiously in convening the following VRBPAC meetings:

- **June 7:** VRBPAC meeting to discuss an EUA request for a COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by Novavax to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 18 years and older.
- **June 8, 21 & 22:** The FDA has held these dates for VRBPAC to convene to discuss updates to the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech EUAs for COVID-19 vaccines to include younger populations. The FDA will provide additional details about the VRBPAC meetings as the sponsors complete their submissions and as FDA reviews the data and information submitted.
- **June 28:** VRBPAC will convene to discuss whether the SARS-CoV-2 strain composition of COVID-19 vaccines should be modified, and if so, which strain(s) should be selected for Fall 2022. This meeting is a follow-up to the April 6 VRBPAC meeting that discussed general considerations for future COVID-19 vaccine booster doses and the strain composition of COVID-19 vaccines to further meet public health needs.

The FDA intends to livestream the VRBPAC meetings on the [agency's YouTube channel](#); the meetings will also be webcast from the FDA website. [Read more.](#)



Evusheld: COVID-19 preventive medication

The CDC has identified Evusheld as an investigational medicine that can help prevent COVID-19. Evusheld has two antibodies that can help prevent COVID-19, and individuals may be eligible for the medication if they:

- Mount an adequate immune response to COVID-19 vaccination OR have a history of severe allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccines, and
- Do not currently have COVID-19 and have not recently had close contact with someone with COVID-19, and
- Are an adult or adolescent ages 12 years and older weighing at least 88 pounds (40 kg)

Patients should speak with a healthcare provider prior to exposure to determine if they are eligible for Evusheld. Individuals who are prescribed Evusheld are also advised to maintain [prevention methods](#) to help stop the spread of COVID-19. [Read more.](#)

Updated cooler return process for Moderna shipments

Effective April 29, 2022, providers no longer receive UPS return labels for medium and large frozen shipping containers. UPS return labels will continue to be provided for small shipping containers, which represent more than 98% of all Moderna shipments, so that these containers may be returned and refurbished.

Please dispose of any medium or large frozen shipping containers and packing materials as you would any other waste. Providers are encouraged to recycle the cardboard components of their medium and large frozen shipping containers through their local recycling program.



Temperature monitoring device requirement

This week the Louisiana Office of Public Health Immunization Program notified certain providers who have outstanding Digital Data Logger (DDL) certificates of calibration. **As a reminder, providers who are currently out of compliance must obtain the DDL device by May 22, 2022, or they will be removed as a COVID-19 vaccination provider. Providers are to submit current and valid certificates of calibration to their Regional Vaccine Specialists.**

Please see the [2022 Louisiana Vaccines for Children Program Digital Data Logger Thermometer Guide](#) for more information on storage and handling requirements, and for a list of DDL vendors. Certificates can be emailed to the individuals listed below:

- Region 1: [Jean Marie Baudouin](#)
- Region 2: [Jennifer Carter](#)
- Region 3: [Peggy Bowers](#)
- Region 4: [Julia Ceaser](#)
- Region 5: [Peggy Bowers](#)
- Region 6: [Susan Babineaux](#)
- Region 7: [Primette Braden](#)
- Region 8: [Danielle Hudleston](#)
- Region 9: [Melanie Williams](#)

Convenient options for free COVID tests in Louisiana

Louisiana residents have three convenient options to obtain free COVID-19 tests. Free COVID-19 testing supplies are available through pharmacy pick-up, home delivery, and community-based testing. Information to share with patients:

- Pharmacy Pick-up: Most health insurance plans cover the cost of COVID-19 tests. Patients should contact their insurance providers to determine eligibility.
- Home Delivery: Households can order individual rapid antigen tests at usps.com. The tests will arrive via mail.
- Community-Based Testing Sites: Individuals seeking a nearby community-based testing site can visit <http://ldh.la.gov/page/covid19-testing-sites>.

Resource for providers:

- Providers can download and print the [Louisiana Free COVID-19 Tests Fact Sheet](#) for posting or distribution.



COVID-19 resources

- [COVID-19 Vaccine: Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccine C](#)
- [Home Page - COVID-19 Vaccine Lot Number and Expiration Dates](#)
- [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Administration Overview for Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Administration Overview for Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [CDC COVID Data Tracker: Vaccinations in the US](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Handling Toolkit](#)

Good reads

- [The US is closely watching this Covid surge for clues](#)
- [FDA officials say annual Covid-19 shots may be needed in the future](#)
- [Beijing restricts public transport as COVID spreads](#)
- [Covid hospitalization may affect thinking similar to 20 years of ageing](#)
- [Fewer than 1 in 5 US parents say they'll get Covid-19 vaccines for kids under 5 as soon as they can, survey finds](#)
- [CVS sales up 11%, lifted by Covid-19 demand](#)
- [Covid Moderna \(MRNA\) Q1 earnings 2022](#)

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE BOOSTER?

WHAT DID YOU GET?	WHEN CAN YOU GET A BOOSTER?	WHEN CAN YOU GET A 2ND BOOSTER?*	WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A BOOSTER?*
Pfizer	5 months after 2nd dose	4 months after 1st booster dose	12 years and older for 1st booster
Moderna	5 months after 2nd dose	4 months after 1st booster dose	18 years and older for 1st booster
Johnson & Johnson	2 months after initial shot	4 months after 1st booster dose	18 years and older for 1st booster

*We recommend you talk to your doctor about the best time to get your 2nd booster shot

** for 2nd dose eligibility, you must be age 50+. Also eligible are people age 12 and older with moderate or severe immunosuppression

Call 211 or visit covidvaccine.la.gov to find out when and where you can get vaccinated.



Submit a Question of the Week

Do you have a frequently asked question that you would like to submit or have answered in the QOW?

[SUBMIT HERE](#)

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