



Jefferson County



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Central Oregon Public Health Monthly Update September 29, 2023

2023 Respiratory Season and the Updated COVID-19 Vaccine

In mid-September, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended everyone ages six months and older receive the updated COVID-19 vaccine that more closely targets the currently circulating Omicron XBB.1.5 variant. This new vaccine provides better protection against serious consequences of COVID-19, including hospitalization and death. The CDC also recommends the following:

- Children 6 months through 4 years who have *never* received a COVID-19 vaccine should receive two doses of the Moderna vaccine or three doses of the Pfizer vaccine.
- Everyone else should get a single dose of either mRNA brand of vaccine at least two months after receiving their most recent dose.
- The older mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are no longer available in the United States.
- The original Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is still available for people ages 12 and older, though it is not preferred because it does not target the Omicron variants. Novavax's updated COVID-19 vaccine is still under federal review.

Due to the end of the COVID-19 emergency, the vaccines will be distributed similar to how flu vaccines are distributed. Insurance, including Medicare and OHP, will cover the cost of the vaccines. Uninsured and underinsured people are also eligible to receive the vaccine at no cost.

The updated mRNA vaccines have begun to trickle into our community. Local major pharmacies such as Walgreens and Rite-Aid are already providing a limited number of vaccines to people ages twelve and up. Deschutes County Health Services will focus on vaccinating our most at-risk community members, including those residing in shelters and long term care facilities, people who are






uninsured, and those who may not have other ways of accessing the vaccine.

Many medical providers throughout the County, including DCHS, are actively ordering the vaccines and are working towards offering it as soon as possible. We understand that the delay in receiving this updated vaccine can be frustrating and recommend contacting your primary care provider or pharmacy for an appointment, or checking www.vaccines.gov to search for locations.

FLU and RSV

DCHS is planning a few flu vaccine clinics to increase access to our most vulnerable community members. We will not be carrying the RSV vaccine. You can contact your local healthcare provider to inquire about this season's flu and RSV vaccine availability. Here is a handy chart to help explain the various respiratory viruses, eligibility, effectiveness, and recommended vaccination timelines.

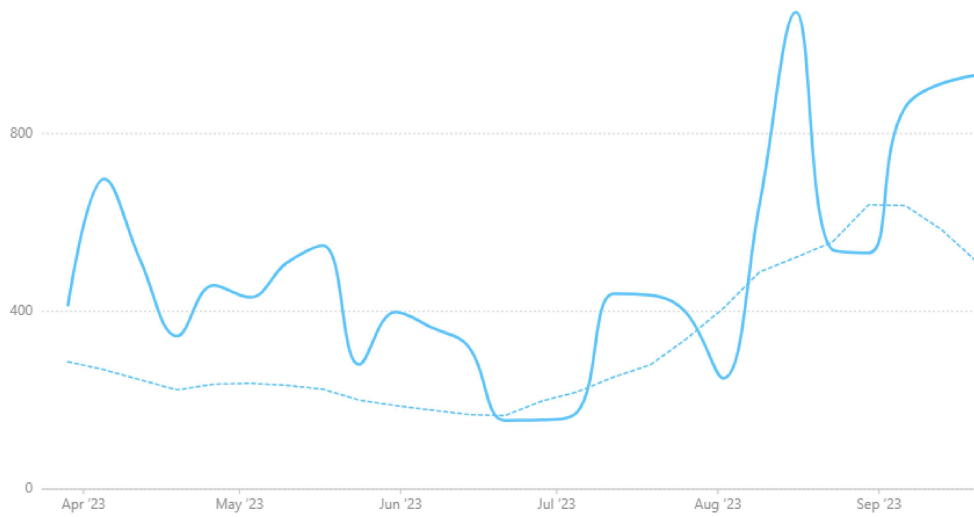
FALL 2023 VACCINES

	What are the options?	Who is eligible?	How well do they work?	When should I get it?
INFLUENZA	 <p>A shot that targets 4 strains of seasonal flu</p>	6 months and older	Reduces the risk of going to the doctor by 53%	October is ideal, as vaccine protection wanes over a season
COVID-19	 <p>Updated vaccine formula targeting XBB – an Omicron subvariant</p> <p>Options: Moderna and Pfizer (mRNA). Novavax (protein) available soon</p>	6 months and older	Last year, the fall COVID-19 vaccine provided 40-60% additional effectiveness against severe disease	<p>Protection against severe disease: Get now</p> <p>Protection against infection: Best to get it right before a wave, which can be challenging to time</p> <p>Recently infected? Wait at least 3-4 months</p>
RSV (OLDER ADULTS)	 <p>2 options: GSK and Pfizer. They are slightly different in design, but only at a microscopic level</p>	60 years and older	82-86% efficacy against severe disease	Now; no need to juggle timing as protection is durable
RSV (PREGNANCY)	 <p>Pfizer is actively seeking approval</p>	Pregnant people (then protection will pass to baby for protection in first 6 months of life)	82% efficacy in preventing hospitalization in first 3 months of life. 69% efficacy after 6 months	It's not available yet but once approved, get at 24 to 36 weeks of pregnancy
RSV MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY	 <p>This is not a vaccine (doesn't teach the body to make antibodies) but rather a proactive medication (provides antibodies)</p>	All infants <8 months. High-risk infants 8-19 months	Reduces risk of hospitalization and healthcare visits by ~80%	<p>Will be available soon.</p> <p>Protection lasts 4-6 months</p>

By: Katelyn Jetelina, MPH PHD and Caitlin Rivers, MPH PHD. For more information go to Your Local Epidemiologist

We will share more information on community availability as we receive it. For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, contact the Central Oregon COVID-19 Hotline at **(541) 699-5109** Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You can also stay updated with the latest information from the [CDC](#) and [Oregon Health Authority \(OHA\)](#).

COVID-19 Monitoring



Over the last month, we have seen an increase in the amount of COVID-19 in the wastewater from the two systems that sample in our community, Bend and Sunriver. Local hospitals have also seen an increase in patients admitted with COVID-19, however these increases are far below highs seen in previous surges.

Starting in October, OSU in partnership with OHA will begin monitoring for influenza and RSV in wastewater. Local epidemiologists will pull surveillance data and compile a report. The surveillance report for respiratory viruses in Central Oregon will be released weekly and we will include it in our next newsletter.

COVID-19 Testing and Treatment Options



Deschutes County Test Distribution Centers

DCHS still offers free COVID-19 At-Home Test Kits for pick-up at several locations across Deschutes County. The goal is for community members to pick up test kits while healthy to store at home in case you develop COVID-19 symptoms. Please do not request to pick up tests if you are actively experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. For more information about pick up locations, [Click Here](#)

COVIDtests.gov

As of September 25, every U.S. household can place an order to receive four more free COVID-19 rapid tests delivered directly to their home. To order your tests, [Click Here](#)

Treatment Services

OHA is partnering with Color Health to offer free telehealth visits in Oregon to anyone who tests positive for COVID-19. Pregnant people and youth as young as 12 can now use Color Health's online or telephone support to get the COVID-19 antiviral medication, Paxlovid. Eligible children ages 12-17 must have parental or adult caregiver consent to use the Color Health service.

No insurance is required. Consultations are confidential and offered in 17 languages. To learn more, click [here](#).

Family Connects Central Oregon Offers Newborn Home Visits in Tri-County area



All babies deserve the healthiest possible start. Family Connects Oregon is a free evidence-based, nurse home visiting program for all parents with newborns.

Family Connects Oregon supports parents by linking nurses to families. Our mission is to connect parents with resources that nurture the whole family and support their child. It's about planting seeds for the future. Together, we're growing healthy babies!

Family Connect Nurses partner with families to provide:

- 1-3 postpartum visits starting around three weeks of age
- Maternal and Newborn Assessment
- Lactation/Feeding Support
- Postpartum and Newborn Education
- Linkages to Maternal Mental Health Support, and more!

To be eligible, you must be a caretaker of a newborn baby, reside in the Tri-County area, and have a current private/commercial insurance policy, OHP, or Medicaid.

[SIGN UP NOW](#) or call for an appointment at 541-322-7475



Global Handwashing Day!



Each year on October 15, [Global Handwashing Day](#) highlights the importance of handwashing with soap and water, especially during [key times](#) throughout the day. CDC has developed resources to promote handwashing throughout the year!

Washing your hands is easy—and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Studies have shown that handwashing can prevent 1 in 3 diarrhea-related sicknesses and 1 in 5 respiratory infections, such as a cold or the flu.



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**Wash your hands
at key times
throughout the day,
especially after using
the bathroom and
before eating.**

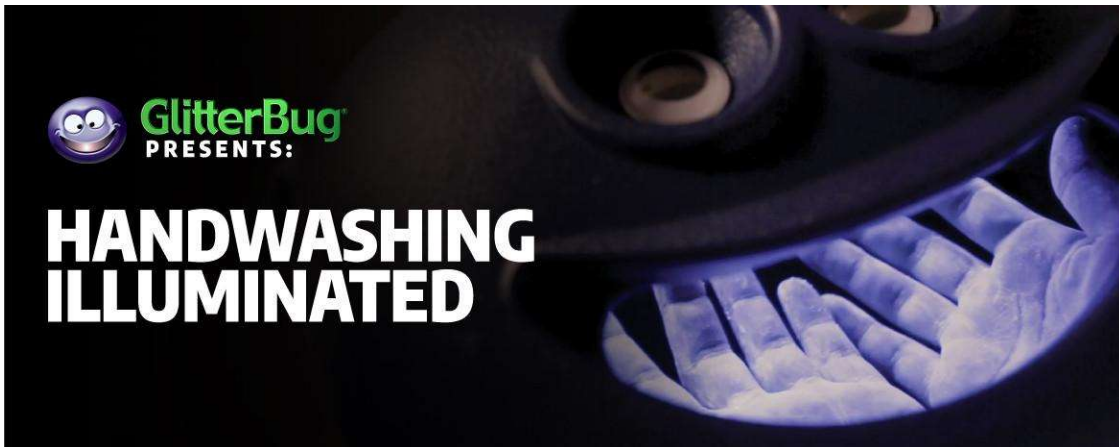
#KeepHandsClean

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

Follow these five steps every time.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands **for at least 20 seconds**. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains **at least 60% alcohol**.



Deschutes County Environmental Health offers **free in-person, interactive handwashing workshops**, ideal for foodservice, healthcare, and educational settings. We utilize Glitterbug for workshops, which uses a black light to illuminate how well you actually wash germs off your hands! Resources are limited so call **541-317-3114** today to reserve your spot. For more information on how clean hands save lives, visit www.cdc.gov/handwashing.

INSIDE DESCHUTES COUNTY



LISTEN NOW

Dr. Richard Fawcett and Emily Horton from Public Health joined the [Inside Deschutes County podcast](#) to answer important questions as we head into cold and flu season. They also discuss changes with the COVID vaccine and what people should do to stay healthy.

You can listen to the full podcast next week at deschutes.org/podcast or you can find us on Apple Podcasts, Google, Spotify and Amazon Music. Just search 'Deschutes County'.

COVID-19 Hotline Hours

- Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Have a question after hours or on weekends? Leave a voicemail, we will respond within 1 business day.
- COVID-19 Hotline: **541-699-5109**



Our Health Equity & Engagement team is out and about in our community. This month you can find us at the following events:

- [La Pine Harvest and Resource Fair at La Pine Elementary School | 10.4](#)
- [Bend Parks and Rec's Fall Community Celebration at Juniper Park | 10.6](#)

Come visit and let us know what you would like to know more about!

Public Health Resources:

- Central Oregon public health web resources:
 - [Crook County](#)
 - [Deschutes County](#)
 - [Jefferson County](#)

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