



Loudoun County, Virginia

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NEWS RELEASE

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What You Need to Know Now About Additional Doses of COVID-19 Vaccine

Virginia is [now offering a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine](#) to people who received two doses of either Pfizer or Moderna and are [moderately and severely immunocompromised](#). This follows the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced August 13 and includes people who have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood;
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system;
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last two years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system;
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome);
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection; and/or
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response.

“The third dose of vaccine is approved for this population because the research shows that they are likely to benefit from an additional dose to make sure they have enough protection against COVID-19,” said Loudoun County Health Director Dr. David Goodfriend. “The additional dose is the same formulation as the first two doses of Pfizer or Moderna received and is available at many pharmacies, medical offices and at the county’s vaccination site.”

“For otherwise healthy people, a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine is currently not recommended,” Dr. Goodfriend added.

The CDC estimates that the new recommendation for a third dose of vaccine affects about 3% of the U.S. population, which amounts to about 12,000 Loudoun residents. As of today, more than 243,000 Loudoun County residents are fully vaccinated, representing 59% of Loudoun’s total population and nearly 73% of Loudoun’s adult population. Many of those who have already received a COVID-19 vaccine may be wondering how the CDC’s recommendation affects them.

“Those who have normal immune systems and already have been fully vaccinated are well protected against the virus, including the Delta variant,” said Dr. Goodfriend. “We remain focused on vaccinating those who have not yet received a COVID-19 vaccine and now are able to offer third doses to those who need it.”

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) authorized](#) on August 12 the use of an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine in certain immunocompromised individuals. The FDA authorization includes the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines only. According to the CDC, there is not enough data at this time to determine whether immunocompromised people who received Johnson

& Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine also have an improved antibody response following an additional dose of the same vaccine. Individuals who received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine should wait for additional guidance from the CDC and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) regarding the possibility of additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine in the future.

The Loudoun County Health Department is closely following the ongoing research and recommendations regarding COVID-19 vaccine. Here's what you should know now about additional doses of COVID-19 vaccines:

- Immunocompromised individuals should wait at least 28 days since their second dose before receiving a third dose; VDH recommends speaking with your health care provider about your medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for you.
- Proof of medical condition is not required to receive a third dose; however, individuals may need to state that they have a moderate or severe immunocompromising condition.
- CDC recommends that immunocompromised individuals receive the same type of vaccine (either Moderna or Pfizer) as they received in their primary series; however, the alternate type may be provided if the primary series product is not available.
- FDA, CDC and the National Institutes of Health are engaged in a rigorous science-based process to consider whether or when a booster might be necessary for the general population.
- A booster dose for other groups may be necessary in the future for a couple of reasons: for someone with a normal immune system, the initially adequate protection after being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 could be lost later on if immunity decreases over time, or if new variants of the virus are different enough that the vaccine's protection becomes limited. If either of these events occurs, a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine could be helpful as a way to regain the protection against COVID-19 that was lost.
- People who are fully vaccinated are protected from severe disease and death, including from the variants currently circulating in the country, such as Delta.
- People who are not vaccinated remain at risk; virtually all current COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths are among those who are unvaccinated.

The Health Department strongly urges anyone 12 and older who has not yet been vaccinated to get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. Visit loudoun.gov/covid19vaccine to find a vaccine provider near you.

In addition to vaccination, to help curb the increase in COVID-19 cases that Loudoun County has been experiencing, the Health Department recommends everyone wear a mask in indoor public settings and practice prevention measures that include: staying 6 feet away from people who do not live in your household; covering your coughs and sneezes; washing your hands frequently; staying home when sick; avoiding contact with sick people; knowing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19; and getting tested if you're symptomatic, or if potentially exposed to COVID-19, regardless of your vaccination status.

More Information:

- [Get a free COVID-19 test in Leesburg on August 16, 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.](#)

- [Learn more on the VDH website about protecting yourself and your family](#)
- [Six Things to Know About the Delta Variant and Why Masks Are So Important Now](#)

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