PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

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Updated Monovalent mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Authorized
Bivalent COVID-19 vaccines no longer authorized for use

This week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized updated monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines for 2023-24, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended the updated vaccines for everyone ages 6 months and older. The updated vaccines provide improved protection against the strains currently causing the most infections and hospitalizations.

Updated COVID-19 vaccines are currently arriving in San Luis Obispo County and will be available from pharmacies, health care providers, and Public Health clinics. We encourage you to discuss the updated vaccines with your patients and to consider providing them in your office.

Vaccination remains the best protection against COVID-19 related hospitalization and death. It can also reduce the chances of suffering the effects of long COVID.

Updated COVID-19 vaccination recommendations
Current recommendations for the updated vaccines include:

- **Everyone aged 5 years and older** should get 1 updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to be up to date.

- **People aged 65 years and older** may get a 2nd dose of updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

- **People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised** may get additional doses of updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

- **Children aged 6 months–4 years** may need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccine to be up to date, including at least 1 dose of updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, depending on the number of doses they've previously received and their age. See the 2023-24 Vaccine Timing Schedule (https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/IMM-1396.pdf) for detailed recommendations for this age group.

For details, see the updated COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs for Providers from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) at https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/Vax58ProviderFAQs.pdf.

Commercialization, ordering, and vaccines for uninsured patients
This is the first COVID-19 vaccine provided through regular health care distribution channels rather than through the federal government.

To learn more about the commercialization of COVID-19 vaccines, see Commercialization at a Glance, COVID-19 Vaccine Commercialization FAQs, or the HHS Commercialization Transition Guide.

Vaccines are available free of charge for uninsured patients via the **Bridge Access Program** and **Vaccines for Children**. Bridge Access Program COVID-19 vaccines are available through https://mycavax.cdph.ca.gov. Vaccines For Children COVID-19 vaccines are available through https://eziz.org/myvfcvaccines. Pharmacies may sign up directly for the Bridge Access Program at https://joinetruenorth.com.

For questions or to sign up as a provider through these programs, please contact us at Public Health.

Deauthorization of bivalent vaccine

With this update, the bivalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are no longer authorized for use. For details on how to dispose of unused bivalent vaccine inventory if you have not already done so, please see the COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs for Providers from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) at https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/Vax58ProviderFAQs.pdf.

For more information

- Full FDA announcement: www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-action-updated-mrna-covid-19-vaccines-better-protect-against-currently-circulating

- Full CDC announcement: www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/p0912-COVID-19-Vaccine.html

- Vaccine fact sheets:
    - Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine | FDA
    - Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine | FDA

- COVID-19 Vaccine Product Guide: https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/IMM-1399.pdf

- Local information about COVID-19: www.slopublichealth.org/covid19