

Panhandle

Public Health District

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For Immediate Release:

COVID booster recommendation update for people aged 65 and older

People aged 65 years and older who received 1 dose of any updated 2023-2024 COVID vaccine should receive 1 additional dose of an updated COVID vaccine at least 4 months after the previous updated dose.

Data continues to show the importance of vaccination to protect those most at risk for severe outcomes of COVID. An additional dose of the updated COVID vaccine may restore protection that has waned since a fall vaccine dose, providing increased protection to adults ages 65 years and older.

Adults 65 years and older are disproportionately impacted by COVID, with more than half of COVID hospitalizations during October 2023 to December 2023 occurring in this age group.

When are you up to date?

Children aged 6 months—4 years

- You are up to date when you get all recommended doses, including at least **1 dose of updated COVID vaccine.**

People aged 5—64 years

- You are up to date when you get **1 updated COVID vaccine.**

Everyone aged 65 years and older

- You are up to date when you have received **2 updated 2023–2024 COVID vaccine doses.**

Most insurance covers the COVID vaccine because of the promising results against severe disease but be sure to check with your insurance provider. PPHD offers free Vaccines for Children (VFC), Vaccines for Adults, and Bridge Access Program (BAP) to support some vaccines. Call your local vaccine provider or PPHD at 308-633-2866 before going to confirm if you are eligible for one of these free vaccine programs. Walk-ins are welcome at our 18 West 16th, Scottsbluff location, Tuesdays through Fridays, 8:30am-4pm.

Side effects after getting a COVID vaccine can vary from person to person. Some people experience a little discomfort and can continue to go about their day. Others have side effects that affect their ability to do daily activities. Side effects generally go away in a few days and tend to be mild and temporary, like those experienced after routine vaccinations. Even if you don't experience any side effects, your body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID.

Common side effects can include:

- Pain, swelling, and redness on the arm where the shot was given.

- Tiredness, headache, muscle pain
- Chills
- Nausea
- Fever

Adverse events after COVID vaccination are rare and usually happen within six weeks of getting a vaccine. The benefits of COVID vaccination continue to outweigh any potential risks. Millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring program in U.S. history.

Myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) or pericarditis (inflammation of the lining outside the heart) have been seen rarely after COVID vaccination. This risk has been observed most commonly in males 12 through 39 years of age. The chance of this occurring is low. CDC, FDA, and other federal agencies continue to monitor the safety of COVID vaccines.

We encourage people visit www.pphd.ne.gov or call 308-633-2866 with questions. Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.ne.gov.