



Media Release

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Vaccination Against Respiratory Illnesses Important This Fall

Yakima, WA- The Yakima Health District (YHD) urges community members to get their COVID-19, flu, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccines this fall to protect their health and the health of those around them. As of September 25, 2023, Yakima County reported a case rate of 105 per 100,000 over 14 days. One month prior on August 26, 2023, Yakima County reported a case rate of 73 per 100,000 over 14 days. This represents a 44% increase in the case rate within one month.

Vaccination helps prevent infection and can also prevent serious outcomes in people who get vaccinated but have become infected. In addition to vaccination, public health recommendations will continue to be a crucial tool to minimize the spread of respiratory illnesses, such as:

- Receiving the updated COVID-19 vaccine, flu vaccine, and RSV vaccine if eligible.
- Staying home if you are sick and if individuals experience COVID-19 symptoms, get tested.
 - If using an at-home test, individuals can report a positive result by calling Washington State Department of Health at 1-800-525-0127.
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Individuals are encouraged to speak to their primary care provider about vaccination for themselves and their family. These discussions can address questions, concerns, and specific health considerations to make informed decision-making. For those that do not have a primary care provider, please call 2-1-1.

COVID-19 Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended the [updated COVID-19 vaccine](#) for everyone ages 6 months and older to protect against the newer COVID-19

variants, regardless of previous vaccination. The new recommendations include:

- Children 6 months – 4 years old who are unvaccinated are recommended to receive 2 doses of updated Moderna COVID-19 vaccine or 3 doses of updated Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
- Children 6 months – 4 years old who were previously vaccinated are recommended to receive 1 or 2 doses of an updated Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (timing and number of doses to administer depends on the previous COVID-19 vaccine[s] received).
- Anyone 5 years old and older regardless of previous vaccination is recommended to receive 1 dose of an updated Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months since the last dose of any COVID-19 vaccine.

Upcoming Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Individuals can find a list of upcoming community COVID-19 vaccine clinics at www.YakimaVaccines.org. The following vaccine clinics will also offer flu and routine childhood vaccines:

Date	Time	Location
October 2, 2023	2:00pm-6:00pm	Radio KDNA 121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger, WA 98932
October 19, 2023	2:00pm-6:00pm	Radio KDNA 121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger, WA 98932

Individuals can also find a list of local clinics and pharmacies offering COVID-19 vaccines, flu vaccines and RSV vaccines at www.YakimaVaccines.org.

Flu Vaccine

Everyone six months of age and older are recommended to get an annual flu vaccine. Young children, pregnant women, [those with underlying health conditions](#), and people aged 65 and older are at high risk for flu-related complications. The flu is a highly contagious disease that can cause mild to severe illness, and lead to hospitalization and death- even in healthy, young people. Getting a flu vaccine reduces individual's risk of getting the flu, and it can be safely given at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine.

RSV Vaccine

[RSV](#) is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious. Infants and older adults are more likely to develop severe RSV and need hospitalization. RSV vaccines are available to provide protection:

- Adults 60 years old and over
 - Adults 60 years and older may receive a single dose of the RSV vaccine.

- Infants and young children
 - 1 dose of the RSV vaccine for all infants younger than 8 months born during or entering their first RSV season.
 - 1 dose of the RSV vaccine for infants and children 8-19 months old who are at increased risk for severe RSV disease and entering their second RSV season.

Individuals and parents with questions about the RSV vaccine for themselves or for their children should speak to their healthcare provider.

COVID-19 Testing

Households in the United States are eligible to place an order to receive four free COVID-19 tests to be delivered to their home from the federal program. Individuals can place their order at www.COVIDTests.gov or by calling 1-800-232-0233.

The FDA extended the shelf-life of iHealth COVID-19 tests. Individuals that have expired iHealth COVID-19 tests can check the new expiration date [here](#).

Additional Information

www.YakimaVaccines.org

[CDC: Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Routine Schedule Recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/acip/2020-2021-recommendations.html)

[CDC: Who Needs a Flu Vaccine](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/index.htm)

[WA DOH: Flu Overview](https://www.doh.wa.gov/HealthTopics/Flu/Flu-Overview)

[CDC: Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Immunizations](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/rsv.htm)

www.COVIDTests.gov

[iHealth Expiration Date Extension](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/explainer/expiration-dates.html)

[WA DOH: Free Telehealth Appointments for COVID-19 Treatment](https://www.doh.wa.gov/HealthTopics/Telemedicine/Telehealth-Appointments-COVID-19)

[WA DOH: Care Connect Washington](https://www.doh.wa.gov/HealthTopics/Telemedicine/Care-Connect-Washington)

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