



**NEVADA
HEALTH
RESPONSE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 Press Bulletin for October 28, 2021

Carson City, NV — Today, Candice McDaniel, Deputy Director for Programs for the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Karissa Loper, Health Bureau Chief for the Bureau of Child, Family and Community Wellness, State Epidemiologist Melissa Peek-Bullock and Dr. Ellie Graeden of Talus Analytics provided updates on the state's COVID-19 response.

This bulletin provides facts, figures, and informational items from the call. As a reminder, data is provided in a dashboard on the home page of the [Nevada Health Response](#) website.

As a reminder, the next two calls will be on Wednesdays as the State observes two holidays. The next call is November 10th as the State will observe Veterans Day on the 11th.

BOOSTERS:

- There are now booster recommendations for all three available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States.
- The vaccines have been reviewed and it has been determined that individuals can choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose.
- CDC's recommendations now allow for mix-and-match dosing for booster shots.
- People with questions about which booster dose will fit their specific health or occupation needs are encouraged to speak with a trusted health care provider.
- The same priority groups that were identified for Pfizer have been recommended for Moderna:
 - 65 years and older;
 - Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings;
 - Age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions;

- Age 18+ who work or live in high-risk settings
- A person who received a J&J vaccine as their primary dose is recommended to receive a booster dose 2 months after the original dose and they can also choose any product.
- The Nevada State Immunization Program is working closely with Nevada's vaccinating providers, local health authorities and other partners to share updates and information.
- A [Technical Bulletin](#) has been completed and the State is answering questions and providing information as needed.
- One common question is whether or not you must receive a booster dose to be considered fully vaccinated.
- At this time, the answer is no. You are fully vaccinated if you have completed the initial vaccination series, however those who fall into the categories mentioned are encouraged to speak to a trusted health care provider about receiving their booster.
- Because of vaccination, the Delta surge is continuing to recede across the state.
- In Nevada, new COVID-19 cases have decreased by 21% since October 8th, similar to the 25% decrease in new cases nationally.
- In Nevada, COVID-19 deaths decreased 41% between October 10th and 24th, compared to a much smaller 13% decrease nationwide.
- At the same time, Nevada hospitals are still dealing with critical staffing shortages and flu may place an additional burden on hospitals as winter begins, making vaccination even more important.

VACCINES FOR KIDS:

- The State is looking forward to vaccination for its younger residents.
- The FDA's Advisory Committee met on Tuesday to discuss Pfizer's request to amend their Emergency Use Authorization for vaccine administration to include children ages 5 to 11 years.
- The Committee has recommended that children aged 5 to 11 years receive two pediatric doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine 3 weeks apart. The pediatric dose is $\frac{1}{3}$ the amount of the adult dose.
- A formal recommendation is expected to be released prior to the next meeting of CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices which is scheduled to meet on November 2nd and 3rd.
- The Nevada State Immunization Program has been preparing for this rollout with vaccinating partners statewide, including pediatricians and family practice clinics,

Federally Qualified Health Centers, pharmacies, local county health partners, and Immunize Nevada.

- Nevada is prepared to ensure vaccines are readily available across the state as soon as the final FDA and CDC recommendations are released.
- COVID cases among 5–11-year-olds in Nevada have declined from a peak of ~261 weekly cases per 100,000 children in August to ~122 weekly cases per 100,000 in early October.
- Widespread COVID-19 vaccination for this age group can decrease cases further.
- The State has been in contact with many of Nevada’s pediatricians to find out if they plan to offer COVID-19 vaccination for their patients.
- Currently, 233 enrolled providers serve children, including 113 of Nevada’s Vaccines for Children Providers, and the State is working to enroll more vaccinators to ensure the vaccine is available in locations that are convenient for families.
- Similar to the first rollout late last year, the State is planning for an allocation of COVID-19 vaccine for the 5 to 11 year-old age group and is working with providers to order the allocated doses to be available as soon as CDC’s recommendations are issued.
- Approximately 95,000 doses of the vaccine for this age group will be available to Nevada initially and will be equitably distributed statewide.
- Vaccinating school age children is vital and will help them to have more days in the classroom and fewer interruptions to in-person learning.
- School cases have declined by 48% since late September, which is following the statewide trends.
- However, cases may still increase, and students may still miss school because of a COVID-19 exposure.
- Nationally, 25% of U.S. parents say that their child missed school because of a COVID-19 exposure this school year.
- Controlling community-wide COVID-19 spread keeps students in school and prevents unnecessary learning disruptions.
- Nevada schools can also prevent COVID-19 outbreaks by implementing layered approaches, including promoting vaccination, universal masking, physical distancing, and school testing strategies.

HALLOWEEN:

- Last week the Nevada Health Response issued [guidance for the upcoming Halloween weekend](#).
- All Nevadans should consider their health and the health of others when celebrating Halloween and Nevada Day.
- The guidance offers suggestions to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19.
- Outdoor gatherings are considered safer than indoor gatherings.
- Masks are required for all individuals in public indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status, in all counties except for Esmeralda that has sustained a low transmission rate by the CDC.

RECEIVING BOTH A FLU AND COVID VACCINE:

- Flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be co-administered and are both strongly recommended.
- Based on recommendations from the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics, all Nevadans 12 and older can safely get the COVID and flu vaccine at the same time this fall, with no wait between shots.
- Administering all the vaccines a person is eligible for at the same visit is a standard best practice, and the CDC has extensive guidance for health care providers on co-administering vaccines.
- The body's immune response and side effects are generally the same when the two vaccines are co-administered.
- Last year, the flu season was mild because people were implementing many mitigation measures for COVID-19.
- As mitigation measures were relaxed, flu cases increased and there is risk of a more severe flu season this winter.
- A recent study from the CDC showed a 26% lower risk of ICU admission and a 31% lower risk of death from flu in vaccinated adults.
- There are many flu shot clinics planned for communities statewide, or at a convenient pharmacy location.

PREGNANT WOMEN:

- In addition to flu shots, the CDC issued an urgent recommendation for pregnant people, and those who have recently given birth, to get vaccinated against coronavirus.
- Nationwide over 97% of pregnant people hospitalized with COVID-19 are unvaccinated.

- Getting sick with COVID-19 while pregnant has been associated with preterm birth, stillbirth, or other newborn illnesses.
- Those who are pregnant are at higher risk of severe COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccination is safe for those who are pregnant and multiple studies and rigorous safety monitoring have shown no difference in pregnancy outcomes between the general population and people who receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

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