October 17, 2022

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the COVID-19 Bivalent Booster

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to provide the latest answers to questions about the updated COVID-19 Bivalent Booster. This information has been sourced from guidance from IDPH, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and partner agencies.

Who is eligible for the bivalent booster?
The bivalent boosters are available for people ages 5 and older who have received their primary series (2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer, 1 dose of J&J).

On October 12, 2022, the FDA authorized use of the updated COVID-19 vaccines for children as young as 5 years old.
- The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is available to children ages 5 through 11 years
- The Moderna vaccine is available to children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years.
- For more information on eligibility, visit the CDC Stay Up to Date with Vaccines website.

What does the bivalent booster do?
The updated (bivalent) boosters are called “bivalent” because they protect against both the original virus that causes COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, including subvariants BA.4 and BA.5.

When can I get the updated booster?
Anyone who is eligible (see above) and has not received any primary series or booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in the past 2 months, should get their booster. If you tested positive for COVID-19 in the past, it is recommended that you also wait for at least 3 months since your COVID-19 infection to receive the vaccine.

Can I get any type of COVID-19 vaccine for the booster dose?
Yes. The CDC stated that you can “mix and match” any of the available bivalent COVID-19 vaccines for your booster dose.

How many doses of the bivalent booster need?
Only a single booster dose is recommended at this time by the CDC.

What if I am immunocompromised?
If you are immunocompromised, it is even more important that you stay up to date with COVID-19 boosters. Visit the CDC website: CDC COVID-19 Vaccines for People Who Are Moderately or Severely Immunocompromised for more details.

Where can I get this bivalent booster?
The best way to locate a vaccine provider near you is to go to www.vaccines.gov and search for bivalent booster availability.

Can I get the COVID-19 bivalent booster AND the flu shot at the same time?
Yes – and it’s encouraged!

For the latest information on COVID-19, including guidance on testing and treatment, visit IDPH Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) website.