Philadelphia COVID-19 Vaccine Newsletter

Philadelphia Department of Public Health

The Latest Numbers
- 1,388,321 people ages 18 and up (95%) got at least one dose of vaccine and 1,070,082 people ages 18 and up (79.4%) are fully vaccinated in Philadelphia, as of January 25th, 2022.
    - 93 % of people ages 12 and up and over one third (35.2%) of Philadelphia's children ages 5 – 11 years old have received at least one dose of the Pfizer vaccine.
- Find the newest information on the PDPH COVID-19 webpage at phila.gov/COVID or on the Department's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Latest COVID Vaccine News
- The Omicron variant seems to have slowed in Philadelphia and the number of people getting COVID-19 is just starting to go down. However, the danger has not passed, and the Omicron variant still makes it very easy to pass COVID-19 from person to person. Here is how to stay safe:
    - Get vaccinated/boosted: https://www.phila.gov/vaccine
        - Being fully vaccinated and boosted is the best way to keep from getting severe COVID, and can help lower your chance of catching COVID.
    - Wear a mask when around others, two if you're in a crowded space.
    - Stay home if you're sick.
    - Get tested if you've been exposed or are feeling symptoms: www.phila.gov/testing.
- PDPH has updated its guidance for schools: https://bit.ly/Jan19COVIDforSchools
    - Find information on masking, isolation and quarantine, testing and more.

COVID-19 Vaccine Information
- **Where to find a COVID-19 vaccine:**
    - Call 3-1-1 or visit phila.gov/vaccine or vaccines.gov to find a vaccine clinic near you.
        - For interpretation, call 3-1-1, press #5 and say your language.
    - Vaccine is free, no insurance or ID required!
- **Where to find a COVID-19 test:**
    - Visit www.COVIDtests.gov to order your free at-home rapid COVID-19 test kits.
    - Call 3-1-1 or visit phila.gov/testing to find a site near you (available in 6 languages).
    - Testing is FREE at most sites in Philadelphia.
    - Testing event schedule is available here: https://bit.ly/COVIDtestingevents
- **Lost Vaccination Card?**
    - Ask your healthcare provider first, if they cannot help, call 215-685-5488 or email covid@phila.gov to request a copy of your vaccine record.
    - The CDC does not provide copies of COVID-19 vaccination card.
- **Have an upcoming public health event happening in your community?**
    - Send us an email at COVIDVax@phila.gov with a file of your event flyer at least two weeks in advance and we will advertise your event on our social media!

FAQ: Updated Mask Guidelines
- **Why did the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) change their recommendations about masks again?**
    - There used to be a shortage of N95 and KN95 masks that needed to be reserved for essential workers and people with high risk of getting severely sick with COVID-19.

- There are two reasons the guidance changed:
    - 1) There is no longer a shortage of these masks.
    - 2) The Omicron variant that is responsible for 98% of cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. is very easily passed from person to person so people need updated information on how to wear masks correctly.
- **What are the types of masks and respirators and how do they work?**
    - Masks and respirators can provide different levels of protection depending on the type of mask and how they are used.
        - Loosely woven cloth products provide the least protection.
        - Layered finely woven products offer more protection.
        - Well-fitting disposable surgical masks and KN95s offer even more protection.
        - Well-fitting NIOSH-approved respirators (including N95s) offer the highest level of protection.
- **Which mask should I use?**
    - Wear the most protective mask you can that:
        - 1) Fits you well.
        - 2) You will wear consistently.
    - Choose a mask with a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out the top of your mask.
        - Bend the wire over your nose to fit the mask close to your face.
    - Do NOT wear a mask with valves or vents. These let air in and out, making the mask less effective.
- **Are two masks better than one?**
    - Yes, you can layer masks in two ways:
        - 1) Use a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric.
        - 2) Wear a disposable mask underneath a cloth mask.
            - The cloth mask should push the edges of the disposable mask against your face.
    - Do NOT combine two disposable masks or combine a N95 or KN95 with any other type of mask.
- **How do I use a mask correctly and why does it matter?**
    - All types of masks or respirators should:
        - Fit closely over your nose, mouth and chin, with no gaps.
        - Be comfortable enough when worn properly (covering your nose and mouth) so that you can keep it on when you need to.
    - Gaps can let air leak in and out around the edges of the mask. If you have gaps, then you are not well-protected or protecting those around you.
        - Gaps can be caused by choosing the wrong size or type of mask and when a mask is worn with facial hair.
- **How do I check that my mask fits and is protecting me and the people around me?**
    - Check for gaps by cupping your hands around the outside edges of the mask.
        - Make sure no air is flowing from the area near your eyes or from the sides of the mask.
    - If the mask has a good fit, you will feel warm air come through the front of the mask and may be able to see the mask material move in and out with each breath.
- **CDC Guide to Masks:** https://bit.ly/CDCguide2masks
- **More about the updated guidelines here:** https://bit.ly/Jan21CDCmaskUpdate

More Information
- **Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline:** 800-722-7112, press #9 for interpretation. Open 24/7!
    - Talk to a medical professional about COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, vaccine, tests, etc.
- **Transportation and access and functional needs resources**: https://bit.ly/KnowB4Ugo
    - This includes an up-to-date description of access at City-run clinics.

- **Disability Health Forum video with ASL:** https://bit.ly/Nov2021DisabilityHealthForum
    - Includes current topics, FAQs and more. Current as of November 19, 2021
    - For future disability health announcements, contact liam.dougherty@phila.gov
- **Questions on all 3 vaccines from PDPH:** https://bit.ly/COVIDvaxFAQ-PDPH (English) and from the CDC at https://bit.ly/COVIDvaxFAQ-CDC (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and more)

How to Stay Connected
- Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 and get updates on your phone and find the latest information at phila.gov/COVID, facebook.com/phillyhealth and twitter @PHLPublicHealth
- This newsletter is sent to the Community Response Partner Network Sign up at https://bit.ly/phlcommunityresponse to get essential public health information, then pass it on to your family, friends, and community.
- Questions or suggestions? Email us at COVIDVax@phila.gov or leave a message with the Public Health Preparedness Program Outreach Team at 215-429-3016.

Be safe!