



Public Health Recommendation

Updated COVID-19 Vaccination (2023-2024)

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control — Sept. 28, 2023

Having reviewed the available data and side effect profiles for the updated COVID-19 vaccine, DHEC recommends that all eligible people 6 months of age and older receive this important, updated vaccine. Although the vaccine may not provide 100% protection against infection, it is likely to prevent the most harmful outcomes of COVID-19. This recommendation extends especially to those 60 and older, and those with other medical conditions that may cause complications from COVID-19 infection. As always, DHEC also recommends and encourages people to speak with their health care provider to evaluate the risks and benefits of vaccination.

DHEC recommends:

- Vaccination for all eligible people 6 months of age and older.
- Vaccination especially for those 60 and older, and people with other medical conditions.
- People speak with their health care provider to evaluate the risks and benefits of vaccination for them.

Benefits:

- Protects against severe illness.
- Decreases risk of hospitalization and death.
- Decreases risk of long COVID.
- Increases community protection for high-risk populations and those who cannot get vaccinated.

Risks:

- Does not prevent infection.
- Slight risk of myocarditis for teenage and young adult males.
- Possible allergic reaction for those getting their first COVID-19 vaccination.
- Common side effects of fatigue, not feeling well and soreness at injection site.

Scientific evidence for this recommendation:

Public health officials rely on research conducted by qualified experts in human and animal research to make recommendations about how to use vaccines to prevent disease. Vaccines are constantly under study, including those developed in response to COVID-19. These studies are designed to measure outcomes like the safety of vaccines, how well they work and potential side effects. Researchers use rigorous methods that avoid bias in the interpretation of results or making unsupported assumptions about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. That approach, along with testing and other safeguards used to ensure the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, helps form the foundation of this recommendation.

- MMWR: June 16, 2023 / 72(24);657–662
[Interim Recommendations for Use of Bivalent mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines for Persons Aged ≥6 Months — United States, April 2023](#)
- [Myocarditis and Pericarditis After mRNA COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC](#)
- [Notes from the Field: Comparison of COVID-19 Mortality Rates Among Adults Aged ≥65 Years Who Were Unvaccinated and Those Who Received a Bivalent Booster Dose Within the Preceding 6 Months — 20 U.S. Jurisdictions, September 18, 2022–April 1, 2023](#)
June 16, 2023MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report / Vol. 72 / No. 24 / P. 667–669

Additional resources to learn more:

- [DHEC website](#) or Care Line at [1-855-472-3432](tel:1-855-472-3432)
- [CDC Vaccine Safety Information](#)
- [FDA 2023 COVID Vaccine Information](#)
- [FDA Briefing Document on 2023 COVID Vaccine](#)
- [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\) Recommendations](#)