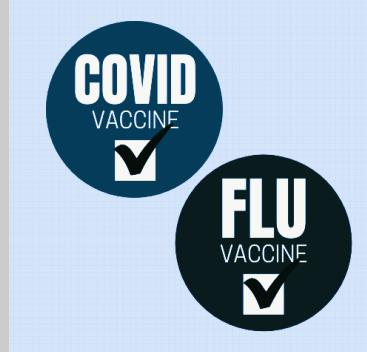


Daniel R. Jasper, MD

Personal Physician

## Flu Shot Drive-Thru Clinics and Update on COVID-19 Booster Shots



Dear Patients:

Please read all details below carefully.

I plan to hold drive-thru flu shot clinics again this season in my office parking lot as I have done in prior years. I will let you know the dates and times as soon as we receive vaccines in our office.

### COVID-19 Booster Shot Recommendations and Answers to Common Questions

The FDA and CDC have approved the first updated COVID-19 booster shots from Pfizer and Moderna.

#### What is different about the new bivalent booster?

The new bivalent COVID-19 booster has been reformulated to target both the original strain of the coronavirus and the now prevalent and more transmissible Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants. BA.5 is the dominant form of the coronavirus now circulating in the U.S., accounting for more than 88% of cases. The monovalent booster previously used for third and fourth doses targeted only the original strain of COVID-19.

#### Who should get the booster?

I recommend this new bivalent COVID booster for all my patients who are fully vaccinated, whether or not you received booster shots, as long as at least two months have passed since your last shot.

#### Should I get the bivalent booster if I recently had COVID-19?

For optimum protection, it is recommended to wait at least three months from when you first experienced COVID symptoms before getting this new booster shot.

#### Which vaccine should I get: Pfizer or Moderna?

Get whichever vaccine you have access to, regardless of which vaccines you previously received. We do not yet know if one brand will be more effective over the other and it is safe to mix-and-match vaccines if you choose to.

#### Where do I get the new bivalent COVID-19 booster shot?

We will not have COVID-19 vaccines in my office but they are now becoming available at local pharmacies. A COVID vaccine and a flu vaccine can be given without the need for a waiting period between the two shots.

#### What are the side effects?

The same side effects commonly reported when receiving the initial monovalent COVID-19 vaccines may be experienced with the bivalent vaccine. These can include pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle and joint pain, chills and fever.

#### Will the original COVID-19 boosters still be available?

No, the monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are no longer authorized as booster doses for individuals ages 12 years and older.

#### Are the bivalent boosters safe?

The FDA and CDC based their decision to recommend emergency use authorization of the bivalent boosters on extensive safety data for each of the original COVID-19 vaccines, and from clinical studies of a similar bivalent COVID-19 vaccine targeting the earlier variants of Omicron. The flu vaccine is updated each year using this same approach.

Stay safe and please reply to this email if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Jasper, MD

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