



Macon County
Public Health

Public Information

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Press Release

PFIZER BOOSTER VACCINES DELAYED AT MCPH DUE TO COVID-19 POSITIVE STAFF

Macon County Public Health will unfortunately have to delay plans to begin giving COVID-19 boosters to eligible persons due to a number of COVID-19 positive staff. This delay **will not affect** persons who wish to call and schedule their initial COVID-19 vaccinations or who need to schedule a COVID-19 test. Those who are eligible for the Pfizer COVID-19 booster vaccination who do not wish to wait are encouraged to contact local pharmacies who may be able to provide this service during this delay. Pfizer booster vaccines will instead begin on October 15th at Macon County Public Health.

The Pfizer booster is only available to those who received their initial vaccines with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination, and have certain conditions, however all over the age of 65 who had the Pfizer vaccine, as their primary COVID-19 vaccinations are eligible. The Moderna and Johnson and Johnson (J&J) vaccines are not approved for additional booster vaccines at this time, though both companies are expected to submit data in support of booster vaccines in the coming weeks. The booster vaccine is available at no cost to those who are eligible, regardless of their insurance status. If you are insured, you are asked to bring your insurance card to your appointment. You do not have to receive your booster at the same location that you received your primary COVID-19 vaccinations.

Each COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and J&J) is working to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death, in people who are fully vaccinated, if they become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. However, with increased variant transmission, researchers are seeing a decrease in protections in those who are fully vaccinated and at additional risk, either due to their immune system or individual risk factors (like their occupation or living situation).

These booster vaccinations will give these individuals the protection that they may have lost over time. There is not currently data to support vaccine boosters in the general population, because the general population has not seen the same decrease in protection, though it is possible that a vaccine booster will be recommended to the general public in the future.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. Therefore, we ask that community members strictly follow the governor's recommendations and continue to practice social distancing, as well as safe hygiene measures such as hand washing and frequently cleaning touched objects and surfaces. Everyone who is eligible is encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, a safe and effective prevention tool.

If you believe that you may have COVID-19, please call the Health Department at 828-349-2081 to schedule an appointment for a test. To register and schedule an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, please call 828-349-2081.

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