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In reply, please refer to:  
File:

October 3, 2025

**MEDICAL ADVISORY: 2025-2026 RESPIRATORY VIRUS SEASON IMMUNIZATIONS**




- DOH has issued immunization recommendations for the 2025–2026 respiratory virus season, as part of the West Coast Health Alliance (WCHA). These recommendations provide evidence-based guidance for protecting against COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).
- Many Hawai'i insurers have indicated they will continue coverage of COVID-19 vaccination.
- Pharmacies in Hawai'i remain an important point of access to COVID-19 vaccination for patients 3 years and older. An Emergency Proclamation issued by Hawai'i's governor on September 23, 2025 protects public access to COVID-19 vaccines through pharmacies without requiring a doctor's prescription.

Dear Healthcare Provider:

The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has issued immunization recommendations for the 2025–2026 respiratory virus season, as part of the West Coast Health Alliance (WCHA). The [WCHA](#) is a newly formed partnership between Washington, California, Oregon, and Hawai'i. The states have worked together to align evidence-based health policies and issue joint recommendations for COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) for this fall. These recommendations draw on guidance from trusted national medical organizations, including the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), the [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#), and the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#), and are grounded in strong scientific consensus.

The 2025–2026 COVID-19 vaccines have an updated formula to better match current dominant variants. Updated COVID-19 vaccines have consistently provided 30-60% additional protection against urgent care visits or being hospitalized compared to people who don't get the vaccine in the fall. This year's formulation is anticipated to provide similar protection. Influenza and RSV fall immunization recommendations align with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations made in June 2025.

## Consensus WCHA 2025-2026 Respiratory Virus Season Immunization Recommendations

Age/Condition	COVID-19	Influenza	RSV
<b>Children</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 6-23 months</li> <li>All 2-18 years with risk factors or never vaccinated against COVID-19</li> <li>All who are in close contact with others with risk factors<sup>1</sup></li> <li>All who choose protection<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 months and older</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All younger than 8 months<sup>2</sup></li> <li>All 8-19 months with risk factors</li> </ul>
<b>Pregnancy</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All who are planning pregnancy, pregnant, postpartum or lactating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All who are planning pregnancy, pregnant, postpartum or lactating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32-36 weeks gestational age<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Adults</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 65 years and older</li> <li>All younger than 65 years with risk factors</li> <li>All who are in close contact with others with risk factors</li> <li>All who choose protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 75 years and older<sup>3</sup></li> <li>All 50-75 years with risk factors</li> </ul>

1. COVID-19 vaccine is available for persons 6 months and older.

2. Protect infants with either prenatal RSV vaccine or infant dose of nirsevimab or clesrovimab.

3. Adult RSV immunization recommendations are currently for a single lifetime dose. Those who have previously received a dose do not need a second dose.

Detailed recommendations, including dosage charts and clinical guidance, are available on [DOH's Respiratory Virus](#) website.

While patients and providers should verify insurance coverage of immunizations administered, DOH and the [State Insurance Commissioner](#) are strongly encouraging health insurers to continue coverage of these life-saving immunizations at no cost to patients. Many [national](#) and Hawai'i insurers have indicated they will continue to provide this protection.

Pharmacies in Hawai'i remain an important point of access to COVID-19 vaccination for patients and the State of Hawai'i has taken steps to ensure this. On September 23, 2025 Governor Green issued an [Emergency Proclamation](#) to protect public access to COVID-19 vaccines in Hawai'i following narrowing of Food and Drug Administration indications which limited availability of COVID-19 vaccines for some groups who can benefit from them. The emergency proclamation provides the legal support needed for pharmacies to continue to be able to administer COVID-19 vaccines to anyone ages 3 and up who wishes to receive them, without requiring a prescription from their primary care provider.

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While the federal [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) vaccine locator website is not operational, COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers do have their own “locator” sites for patients and providers to search for nearby pharmacies offering COVID-19 vaccines:

- [Find vaccines by Moderna near you](#) (Moderna)
- [VaxAssist | Respiratory Vaccine Information](#) (Pfizer)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Near Me | Vaccine Locator | NUVAXOVID™](#) (formerly Novavax)

DOH does not maintain a list of pharmacies that are following West Coast Health Alliance recommendations. However, our staff regularly engage with pharmacy contacts, and most report that they are making COVID-19 vaccines available, though eligible age groups may vary by location. DOH encourages the public to visit pharmacy websites or call ahead to confirm vaccine availability and determine whether an appointment is required.

Thank you for your continued partnership in safeguarding the health of Hawai‘i’s communities.

Sincerely,



Sarah K. Kemble, MD  
State Epidemiologist

## **Additional Resources:**

\*News release: Gov. Green Issues Emergency Proclamation to Ensure Access to COVID-19 Vaccine: <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/office-of-the-governor-news-release-gov-green-issues-emergency-proclamation-to-ensure-access-to-covid-19-vaccine/>

\*Proclamation Relating to Pharmacist Provided Vaccination Services: [https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2509078-ATG\\_Proclamation-Relating-to-Pharmacist-Provided-Vaccination-Services.pdf](https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2509078-ATG_Proclamation-Relating-to-Pharmacist-Provided-Vaccination-Services.pdf)

\*Insurance Commissioner’s Memorandum 2025-7H: COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage: <https://cca.hawaii.gov/ins/commissioners-memorandum-2025-7h-covid-19-vaccination-coverage/>

\*AHIP Statement on Vaccine Coverage – AHIP: <https://www.ahip.org/news/press-releases/ahip-statement-on-vaccine-coverage>

## **COVID-19 Immunization Resources**

COVID-19 Vaccine Timing 2025-26 – Routine Schedule ([View PDF](#))

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## Populations at Increased Risk Recommended for Vaccination Against COVID-19

### ***A. Due to Population Characteristics***

HDOH especially recommends vaccination against COVID-19 for the following persons:

- Those with increased occupational or residential risks:
- Healthcare workers
- Residents of long-term care facilities or other congregate settings
- Those with household contacts who are at high risk for severe COVID-19
- Those who have never been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Infants and children 6 through 23 months of age
- Adults over 65 years of age

### ***B. Due to Medical Conditions That Increase the Risk of Severe COVID-19***

HDOH especially recommends vaccination against COVID-19 for persons with underlying medical conditions that increase their risk of severe COVID-19 disease. These tables provide examples of such underlying medical conditions but are not meant to be complete lists.

## **Children and Adolescents – in accordance with [AAP guidance](#)**

Category	Examples
Blood diseases	Sickle cell disease
Cancers or other immunosuppressive conditions	Leukemia, Receipt of immunosuppressive therapy, Primary immunodeficiency, HIV infection, Transplant Receipt (hematopoietic cell or solid organ)
Cardiovascular diseases	Congenital heart disease
Chronic lung diseases	Asthma or reactive airway disease, Chronic lung disease of prematurity, Compromised respiratory function, e.g., airway abnormality, tracheostomy, or ventilator dependent)
Gastrointestinal or liver disorders	Feeding tube dependent, Inflammatory bowel disease, Chronic liver disease
Metabolic disorders	Diabetes mellitus
Neurologic or neurodevelopmental disorders	Cerebral palsy, Epilepsy. Intellectual developmental disorder. Compromised mobility (e.g., wheelchair dependent)
Obesity	
Pregnancy	

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Category	Examples
Rheumatologic or autoimmune diseases	Systemic lupus erythematosus, Juvenile idiopathic arthritis

**Adults**

Category	Examples
Cancers or other immunosuppressive conditions	Hematologic malignancies, Receipt of immunosuppressive therapy, Primary immunodeficiency, HIV infection Transplant Receipt (hematopoietic cell or solid organ)
Cardiovascular disease	Hypertension, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, congestive heart failure, atrial fibrillation, aortic stenosis
Chronic kidney disease	Chronic kidney disease at any stage
Chronic lung disease	Asthma, bronchiectasis, COPD, cystic fibrosis, OSA, interstitial lung disease, pulmonary embolism, pulmonary hypertension, oxygen dependency
Chronic metabolic disease	Diabetes mellitus, type 1 or type 2
Disabilities	Any type of disability including but not limited to ADHD, intellectual and developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, compromised mobility
Gastrointestinal and liver disease	Alcoholic liver disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, cirrhosis, autoimmune hepatitis, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, chronic liver disease
Hematologic disease	Sickle cell disease, thalassemia
Mental Health	Mood disorders including depression and schizophrenia spectrum
Neurologic disorders	Dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, seizure disorders, cerebral palsy, cerebrovascular disease, spinal cord injury
Overweight and obesity	
Physical inactivity	
Pregnancy	Pregnancy, postpartum, lactating, or planning pregnancy

Category	Examples
Rheumatologic and autoimmune disorders	Rheumatoid arthritis, lupus erythematosus, vasculitis
Smoking	Current or former
Substance use disorders	

### **RSV Immunization Resources**

DOH recommends year-round RSV vaccination in the State of Hawaii for all infants through either maternal vaccination or administration of long-acting RSV monoclonal antibody (nirsevimab or clesrovimab) to the infant.

#### **RSV immunization guidance:**

- [Infants and young children](#) (CDC)
- [Adults](#) (CDC)

### **Influenza Immunization Resources**

#### **Influenza vaccine guidance:**

- [2025-2026 flu vaccine updates](#) (CDC)