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DOH RECOMMENDS RESPIRATORY VIRUS IMMUNIZATIONS

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HONOLULU — The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) recommends the recently updated 2024-2025 flu and COVID-19 vaccines for all persons 6 months of age and older as well as the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) immunization for newborns and infants, pregnant persons, adults over 75 and those 60-74 with certain chronic medical conditions.

“Getting the updated 2024-2025 flu and COVID-19 vaccines as well as RSV immunization are important steps in [staying safe from respiratory viruses](#) and will help minimize the impacts of these diseases in our communities,” said State Health Director Dr. Kenneth S. Fink. “This is especially important as we approach the holiday season.”

In addition to immunization, U.S. households will also once again be able to request four free COVID-19 self-test kits this season starting **Sept. 23, 2024**, at www.COVIDTests.gov.

Both 2024-2025 flu and COVID-19 vaccines have been updated to protect against strains likely to be circulating during the approaching respiratory virus season. The updated seasonal flu vaccines are a [trivalent formulation](#) that protects against H1N1, H3N2, and B/Victoria flu strains likely to circulate. The updated COVID-19 vaccines address recent strains of the Omicron variant and include the mRNA vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna as well as the protein antigen-based vaccine produced by Novavax.

RSV vaccination for adults [is recommended](#) for individuals ages 75 and older, or ages 60-74 who have certain chronic medical conditions, to protect against severe disease. The RSV vaccine is not currently an annual vaccine, meaning people do not need to get a dose every RSV season.

RSV immunization is also recommended to protect infants against RSV infection and severe disease. Without immunization, almost all children by age two will develop an RSV infection which even in healthy infants and children too often causes difficulty breathing and hospitalizations. Highly effective RSV

immunization is recommended for newborns and infants as well as pregnant persons, as this will provide protection to the newborn at birth.

You can receive the COVID-19, flu, and RSV vaccines [during the same visit](#), simplifying the process of staying up to date with CDC recommendations. If you decide to get your vaccines at separate visits, there is no minimum waiting period between vaccines. If you are sick, it is best that you wait until you have fully recovered before getting vaccinated.

Vaccination providers in Hawai'i have already begun receiving the updated vaccines. However, not all providers will have vaccines available at the same time, as shipping timeframes will vary between manufacturers, vaccine distributors, vaccine formulations, and provider locations. Please give your providers time to ensure vaccines are received in good condition, stored properly, and inventoried in their systems, in order to properly administer and document the vaccination of patients. Please contact your vaccination provider for availability of the updated 2024-2025 vaccines.

Getting immunized is one of several ways to protect your health and your 'ohana from respiratory viruses. Vaccinations are also essential in preventing widespread outbreaks and reducing the burden on healthcare systems. You can help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases such as COVID-19, flu, and RSV by staying home when sick, practicing good hygiene, taking steps for cleaner air, and wearing a mask. Please contact your health care provider or local pharmacy if you have questions, to determine vaccine availability, and to schedule a vaccination visit.

For more information on DOH respiratory guidance, visit the [Disease Outbreak Control Division Respiratory Viruses webpage](#).

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