



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PFIZER COVID VACCINE FIRST TO RECEIVE FULL FDA APPROVAL

Third dose of Moderna, Pfizer vaccines recommended for immunocompromised persons

CUMBERLAND, MD – Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration fully approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for individuals age 16 and older, making it the first COVID vaccine in use here in the U.S. to advance from emergency use authorization (EAU) status. With this new designation, the vaccine will now be marketed as Comirnaty (koe-mir'-na-tee). The vaccine also continues to be available under emergency use authorization (EUA), including for individuals 12 through 15 years of age and for the administration of a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals.

Last week, the CDC recommended that people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems who have already received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine get a third dose of the same vaccine given at least four weeks after the second dose.

Among those for whom a third dose is recommended are persons who:

- are receiving cancer treatment;
- are taking immune suppressants as the result of organ or stem cell transplant;
- have been diagnosed with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome);
- have advanced or untreated HIV infection;
- or are actively being treated with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs which may suppress immune response.

Patients are advised to consult their healthcare providers to determine whether they should get a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. More information on the CDC recommendations for booster vaccines can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>.

The Allegany County Health Department continues to offer free COVID-19 vaccinations every Wednesday on the ground floor of the Willowbrook Office Complex, 12501 Willowbrook Road, Cumberland. From 9 a.m. to noon both the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID vaccines are offered for those age 18 and older. Then, from 1 to 4 p.m. the Pfizer COVID vaccine is offered for those age 12 and older. No appointment needed. Anyone under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

As of August 22, 41.8% of Allegany County residents were fully vaccinated against COVID-19, compared to 60.7% of all Marylanders.

Allegany County COVID-19 Case Statistics as of August 22:

- New COVID Cases: 95 (cumulative total 7,465)
- Additional Deaths: 0 (cumulative total 215)
- Cases Per 100,000 Population: 38.75 (Maryland: 16.95)
- Positivity Rate: 9.62% (Maryland: 4.97%)

Free Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing:

Allegany County Fairgrounds, 11400 Moss Avenue, Cumberland, MD
Mondays 2 to 7 p.m.; Wednesdays and Fridays 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
No appointment or insurance card required.

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Media Contacts:



Brenda K. Caldwell
Public Information Officer
Allegany County Health Department
(301) 759-5239
brenda.caldwell@maryland.gov



Mark Karalewitz
Public Information Officer
Allegany County Department of Emergency Services
(240) 609-6506
mkaralewitz@alleganygov.org