

# The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

July 2022



## Infants and children 6 months to 5 years can now receive their COVID-19 vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines are now available for infants and children 6 months to 5 years old. Federal agencies have authorized the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA COVID vaccines for use in these populations.

Both vaccines provide some protection against infection with the Omicron variant, and stronger protection against hospitalization and death.

Pfizer's pediatric vaccine is a three-dose vaccine, with the second dose given 21 days after the first dose, and the third dose given at least eight weeks (two months) after the second dose. The Pfizer vaccine is about 80% effective at preventing infection.

Moderna's pediatric vaccine consists of two doses spaced 28 days (four weeks) apart. The Moderna vaccine was estimated to be between 37% and 50% effective, depending on age, at preventing infection and is likely more effective at preventing hospitalization and death. Experts say a Moderna booster could elevate the level of protection against infection to 80%.

For more information about the pediatric vaccines and to find vaccination sites, visit [de.gov/youthvaccine](https://de.gov/youthvaccine).

## Before the school year begins, children's other vaccinations should be up-to-date

The Division of Public Health (DPH) reminds parents and guardians to schedule children's wellness visits before the school year begins so their vaccinations are current. August is National Immunization Awareness Month.

"Unvaccinated kids are vulnerable to diseases such as the flu, measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox, pertussis, and hepatitis," said James Talbott, manager of DPH's Immunization Program.

"These diseases can have serious complications resulting in blindness, deafness, and even death."

Immunizations keep children healthy, in school, and learning. They reduce the number of days parents and guardians take off from work to care for sick children. Keeping children's vaccinations current also lessens disease in the community.

The Delaware Immunization Program provides children's immunization records upon phone, e-mail request, and through the public access portal ([www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ipp/portalflyer.pdf](https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ipp/portalflyer.pdf)). Contact the program at 1-800-282-8672 weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Uninsured and underinsured children up to age 18 can get vaccinated at Public Health clinics.

For more information about vaccines, visit [de.gov/immunizations](https://de.gov/immunizations) and visit the CDC's [webpage for parents](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/parents/). The Child and Adolescent Vaccine Assessment Tool provides personalized immunization schedules; find it at <https://www2a.cdc.gov/vaccines/childquiz/>. Immunization partners can find resources at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/childhood/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/childhood/index.html).



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

## Prepare before a doctor's appointment

When preparing to see a doctor, follow these tips from the National Institutes of Health (NIH):

- **Take a list of topics you want to discuss.** Bring up the most important matters first.
- **Take information with you to the doctor.** Bring a list of your medications and the dosage you are taking. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal remedies or supplements. Also bring your insurance cards, names and phone numbers of your other doctors, and your medical records if the doctor doesn't have them.
- **Consider bringing a family member or friend.** Your companion can take notes, remind you of what you wanted to discuss, and help you remember what the doctor said. Ask the family member or friend to wait in the waiting room if you need to discuss private issues.
- **Keep your doctor up to date.** Tell the doctor what happened since your last visit, such as pain, fever and other symptoms, difficulty sleeping or walking, and changes in your appetite, weight, or energy level, or medications.
- **Wear your glasses or hearing aids.** Let the doctor and staff know if you have trouble seeing or hearing, or if you do not understand their diagnosis or instructions.
- **Request an interpreter if you need one before the appointment.** By making that request in advance, the office can make arrangements.

For more information and to read these recommendations in Spanish, visit the NIH at <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/how-prepare-doctors-appointment>.



## Drink plenty of water in summer heat

It's important to avoid heat-related illnesses by practicing good hydration. The Division of Public Health (DPH) recommends drinking plenty of water, even if you are not thirsty, to prevent dehydration.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines dehydration as “a condition that can cause unclear thinking, result in mood change, cause your body to overheat, and lead to constipation and kidney stones.” Another way to prevent dehydration is to avoid sugary drinks, alcohol, and drinks with caffeine such as coffee and energy or sports drinks.

The CDC recommends that athletes schedule workouts and practices early in the morning or in the evening when the temperature is cooler and to begin exercising slowly. Athletes should drink more water than usual and know that muscle cramping may be an early sign of heat-related illness.

Individuals with diabetes need to take special care in the heat. The CDC warns that if their blood vessels and nerves are damaged, their bodies are unable to cool effectively. To combat the summer heat and humidity, individuals with diabetes should drink enough water, test their blood sugar often, and stay inside in air conditioning – especially when it reaches 80°F in the shade with 40% humidity or higher. They should not store insulin or oral diabetes medicine in direct sunlight or in a hot car. They should have a plan on how to refrigerate their medications in case they lose power, and they should have a go-bag packed in case of emergency.

A tutorial about preventing heat-related illness is at [www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/extreme/heat\\_illness\\_training.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/extreme/heat_illness_training.htm).

## Prevent rabies: do not touch stray or wild animals

The Division of Public Health (DPH) reminds Delawareans not to touch stray or wild animals to avoid rabies, a fatal yet preventable disease.



On June 28, the Delaware Public Health Laboratory (DPHL) confirmed rabies in a stray cat in the area of Smyrna Landing Road in Smyrna, Delaware. DPH advised two potentially exposed individuals to begin post-exposure prophylaxis treatment. Anyone who thinks they might have been bitten, scratched, or have encountered a cat in this area should immediately contact their health care provider or call the DPH Rabies Program at 302-744-4995. An epidemiologist is available 24/7. Anyone in the area who thinks a cat may have bitten their pet should immediately call their private veterinarian to have their pet examined and treated.

To date in 2022, DPHL has confirmed eight cases of rabies in two raccoons, three foxes, and three cats.

To prevent rabies exposure, take these steps:

- Have a licensed veterinarian vaccinate all dogs, cats, and ferrets 6 months of age and older against rabies, as required by state law.
- Keep pets indoors. Do not let them roam. Spaying or neutering your pet may reduce the tendency to roam or fight.
- Keep pet food and water dishes indoors.
- Do not touch or otherwise handle wild or unfamiliar animals, including cats and dogs, even if they appear friendly.
- Do not feed feral animals, including cats.
- Keep garbage securely covered.

Report sick stray domestic animals, such as a cat or dog, to DPH's Office of Animal Welfare at 302-255-4646. Report wild animals that behave aggressively or are sick or injured to the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Wildlife Section at 302-739-9912 or 302-735-3600.

For more information about rabies, visit DPH at [www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/rabies.html](http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/rabies.html) or call 1-866-972-9705; or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov/rabies/](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/).

## Cook safely to prevent fires and burns

Prevent damaging kitchen fires, burns, and scalds by following these safe cooking tips from the American Burn Association (ABA):

- Cook when you are wide awake and not drowsy from medications or alcohol.
- Wear short, close-fitting, or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking.
- Have a "kid-free zone" of at least three feet around the stove.
- Always wipe the stove, oven, and exhaust fan clean to prevent grease buildup.
- Turn pot or pan handles to the back of the stove so they cannot be pulled down.
- Keep a pan lid near you every time you cook and use it when frying to prevent grease splatter. If food catches fire, cover the pan, let it cool in place, and turn the heat off.
- Use dry (not damp) oven mitts or potholders to prevent burns. Keep them nearby.
- Allow food to rest before removing it from the microwave.
- Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling food.
- When simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly.
- Remain in the home while food is cooking and use a timer to remind you to check on your food.
- After cooking, turn off all burners and appliances.



[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)

If a burn or scald occurs, take these first aid steps:

- Right away, put the burn in cool water for three to five minutes.
- Cover the burn with a clean, dry cloth. Do not apply creams, ointments, or sprays.
- Remove all clothing, diapers, jewelry, and metal from the burned area, as they can hide underlying burns and retain heat.

For more information about fire prevention, visit ABA at <https://ameriburn.org/> and the Delaware State Fire School at <https://statefireschool.delaware.gov/>.