

US orders 200 mn more Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine doses

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The United States will purchase 200 million more COVID-19 vaccine doses from Pfizer and BioNTech and has an option to buy additional doses to address virus variants, the companies announced Friday.

The additional 200 million doses are expected to be delivered from October 2021 through April 2022, bringing the total supplied by the

companies to the US government to 500 million.

The US government "also has an option to acquire an updated version of the vaccine to address potential variants, as well as new formulations of the vaccine, if available and authorized," the companies said in a press release.

The Pfizer-BioNTech alliance said earlier this month that they would seek regulatory authorization for a third dose of their COVID-19 vaccine.

However, US health officials reacted cautiously to the prospect of additional doses, saying "Americans who have been fully vaccinated do not need a booster shot at this time," according to a July 8 statement from the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"We are prepared for booster doses if and when the science demonstrates that they are needed," the agencies said.

US authorities have warned that COVID-19 is becoming a "pandemic of the unvaccinated" as the Delta variant leads to the latest surge in US infections and as the virus continued to wreak havoc in other countries.

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