

Panel votes to add COVID shots to recommended vaccinations

October 20 2022, by Mike Stobbe



A nurse prepares a syringe of a COVID-19 vaccine at an inoculation station in Jackson, Miss., Tuesday, July 19, 2022. On Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022, a panel of U.S. vaccine experts said COVID-19 shots should be added to the lists of recommended vaccinations for kids and adults. Credit: AP Photo/Rogelio V. Solis, File

COVID-19 shots should be added to the lists of recommended vaccinations for kids and adults, a panel of U.S. vaccine experts said Thursday.

The panel's unanimous decision has no [immediate effect](#)—COVID-19 shots already are recommended for virtually all Americans. Rather, it would put the shots on the annually updated, formal lists of what vaccinations doctors should be routinely offering to their patients, alongside shots for polio, measles and hepatitis.

The expert panel's decisions are almost always adopted by the CDC director and then sent to doctors as part of the government's advice on how to prevent disease.

State and local officials often look to the lists in making decisions about vaccination requirements for school attendance, but local officials don't always adopt every recommendation. Flu and HPV shots, for example, aren't required by many schools.

Usually, vaccines placed on the schedules are fully licensed, but that has not yet happened for every COVID-19 [vaccine](#) product in every age group.

COVID-19 shots initially were approved under emergency authorization measures starting in late 2020. Over time, the government has licensed many of the shots, but full approval has not yet happened for booster doses or for shots for kids younger than 12. Because the shots have already been recommended under emergency authorization for Americans older than 6 months, however, the decision makes no real difference, [federal officials](#) say.

Earlier this week, the same [expert](#) panel voted unanimously to add COVID-19 shots to a program that provides vaccines at no cost to

children who might not otherwise be vaccinated. This is in preparation for the day in the future when the federal government transitions out of paying for all COVID-19 shots, as it has been doing.

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