

More than 7 million Americans have gotten the new COVID shots

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Following a rocky roll-out, more than 7 million Americans have now

gotten the newly updated COVID vaccines.

Unfortunately, that's still lagging behind the number who sought booster shots last fall. For the the first updated boosters, 18 million people had received their shots by the same time last year, according to [data](#) from the the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This year's shots were updated to target circulating variants.

About 91% of Americans ages 12 and up can now get the vaccines within five miles of home, as 14 million doses have been shipped to pharmacies and other [vaccine](#) sites. However, some people have reported trouble finding doses or getting [insurance coverage](#) for their shots, CNN reported, and distribution delays have been responsible for some of the issues with the vaccine roll-out.

This year, vaccines are being distributed through the private market, a change from last year.

"The Biden-Harris Administration, through HHS, has been working directly with manufacturers and distributors to ensure that the vaccines are getting to pharmacies, hospitals, clinics, pediatricians and other vaccination sites, including long-term care facilities," a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services spokesperson told CNN. "Just as we did last vaccine season, we will be working to reach Americans where they are and inform them of the updated vaccines and where they can get them."

Among the vaccines are more than 710,000 ordered through the CDC's Vaccines for Children program, which provides vaccines to half of all children in the United States, CNN reported.

"We have about 10,000 babies a day in this country that become newly

eligible for COVID-19 vaccines when they turn six months old, and we're only vaccinating about 7,000 kids a week under the age of four," Dr. Michelle Fiscus, chief medical officer at the Association of Immunization Managers, said during a virtual panel Wednesday hosted by the nonprofit COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Equity Project, CNN reported. Fiscus was referring to data from earlier this year.

"So we have this growing population of young, unprotected children, and that not only impacts the lives of those children, but it really dilutes the [herd immunity](#) that we have in the community by increasing this population every single day of children who are unprotected," Fiscus noted. "This is a situation where choosing to vaccinate your own child can not just help them and the other members of your family, but also can work to help the community at large."

Lori Tremmel Freeman, chief executive officer of the National Association of County and City Health Officials, noted a growing concern that [older adults](#) are also not getting their COVID, flu or new RSV shots, all three available for the first time this year.

"As we head into this respiratory virus season even deeper, we're most worried about the [older people](#) getting protected," Freeman told CNN. "For anyone with underlying [health issues](#), all three vaccines can prevent severe illness, hospitalization or death."

Moderna and Pfizer have mRNA vaccines available for all age groups. An updated, traditional vaccine from Novavax has also been approved for people ages 12 and up.

More information: The Association of American Medical Colleges has more on [COVID boosters](#).

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