

# Expert discusses updated COVID-19 vaccines

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As a summer surge of COVID-19 outbreaks is underway, new vaccines for the virus have been released.

The Food and Drug Administration approved new COVID-19 vaccines for the 2024–2025 season for people ages 6 months and older. These updated vaccines are designed to better protect against recently

circulating variants, helping to prevent serious illness and hospitalization.

"It appears that this virus is going to continue to change as immunity in the population wanes, either after vaccination or prior infection. New strains of this virus will cause outbreaks at different times of the year," says Dr. Matthew Binnicker, director of the Clinical Virology Laboratory at Mayo Clinic.

New COVID-19 variants can evade immunity from earlier vaccination or prior infection, meaning vaccinated or previously infected people may still catch the [virus](#). However, their immunity helps protect them from severe illness.

"The recent vaccines have been designed against a [variant](#) that we saw early in 2024. The immune response that's generated by these new vaccines is much more specific to the strains that are currently in circulation," says Dr. Binnicker.

"Studies have shown that the [immune response](#) is much more pronounced and specific against these variants and helps keep some from getting COVID-19 and, most importantly, keep them from developing severe disease."

## **Who should get the updated COVID-19 vaccines?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone 6 months and older get the updated 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine for better protection this fall and winter. Whether you've previously had a COVID-19 vaccine or not, it's important to stay protected, says Dr. Binnicker.

It's recommended that everyone should get the updated COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available. Those who recently had an infection

should wait three months, or those who had a dose of the older COVID-19 vaccine should wait two months. It is especially important for those who are at higher risk of severe infection.

"Those who are immune compromised, those who are over the age of 75, those with certain preexisting health conditions and those who are pregnant fall into a higher risk category should get the updated COVID-19 [vaccine](#) as soon as possible," explains Dr. Binnicker.

Vaccine protection can wane over time, so staying updated with your COVID-19 vaccination is key to preventing [severe illness](#), hospitalization and possibly death.

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