

Stay Informed While Staying Safe

A Newsletter in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

HAPPY, HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

COVID-19 Boosters Are More Important for Older Adults

Older adults may benefit more from the latest COVID-19 boosters and future updates to the vaccines, recent research suggests.

These individuals are being disproportionately affected by the virus in the U.S. compared with younger citizens, government data shows. To date, the majority of deaths attributed to COVID-19, 75% are of people ages 65 and older, according to data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A study conducted by a researcher at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Texas, found protection offered by two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine decreases with age and is “suboptimal” for older adults.

“The fact that these antibody functions decrease with age is one reason why the elderly are still more susceptible to severe illness with COVID-19 and highlights the need to develop different approaches for older, vulnerable individuals,” Dr. Lenette Lu, Internal Medicine and Immunology at UT Southwestern, said in a statement.

Ultimately, because the study shows receiving two doses of an original vaccine is less effective for older individuals, it “underscores the need for boosters and variant-specific vaccines for older adults,” the release states.

Stanislaus County Moves from Low to Medium

As the winter approaches, the spread of COVID-19 has risen to the medium level of transmission in Stanislaus County and has been resulting in more hospital visits than those caused by other respiratory virus.

According to an article in the Modesto Bee written by Ken Carlson; The coronavirus accounted for 1,966 emergency room and inpatient hospital visits in November at hospitals in the county, more than RSV and influenza. It was the highest number since a peak in July. According to the county data, influenza accounted for 1,114 hospital visits, and 1,044 visits were RSV-infected patients.

Kamlesh Kaur, a spokesperson for the county public health division said, “Our cases have increased, people who are sick should stay home and separate from others, so they don’t spread infection.”



Dr. Thea Papasozomenos, who was appointed Stanislaus County Health Officer, said in an email that wastewater sampling also shows increasing levels of COVID-19 in the Modesto area.

Papasozomenos said the main variant circulating include BA.5, accounting for 23.6% of transmission, and Omicron BA.1 (29.9%). But also include a potentially troubling newcomer, Omicron BQ1.1, now the most prevalent coronavirus strain in California. In the latest state data, the BQ1.1. variant was found in 60% of cases in California.

According to the wastewater sampling, about 30% of transmission in Stanislaus County is BQ1.1.

“While we are seeing a lot of respiratory viruses circulating this season, we also know of ways our community can prevent from getting sick,” Papasozomenos said. “We have vaccines available for both influenza and COVID-19.

COVID activity was also elevated in the latest state data released Thursday, including a new case rate of 13.6 per 100,000 population statewide. California test positivity of 10.8% is double the rate three weeks ago.

Almost 3,800 people hospitalized in the state had COVID-19, including 408 patients in intensive care units, according to the California Department of Public Health

COVID-19 Stanislaus Community Level

Medium

Recommended actions based on current level

- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and Boosters.
- Get tested if you have symptoms.
- Wear a mask if you have symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- You may choose to wear a mask at any time as an additional precaution to protect yourself and others.

	LOW	MEDIUM
Weekly Metrics used to determine the COVID-19 Community Level	11/07	12/07
Case Rate per 100,000 populations	<u>59.75</u>	<u>67.2</u>
New COVID-19 Admissions per 100,000	<u>6.1</u>	<u>11.2</u>
% Staff inpatient beds in use with confirmed COVID-19	<u>3.9</u>	<u>6.3</u>

In Stanislaus County **354,808** people (**64.4%**) have received at least one vaccine dose, **302,378** individuals (**54.9%**) have received at least two doses of the vaccine, and **142,621** people (**25.9%**) received a booster shot.

Where to Get At-Home Test Kits

Testing is important. You may need to test at home or at a local pharmacy who provides tests. Medicare, Medical or private insurance will pay for in-home rapid antigen tests at the pharmacies. However, if you are using private insurance you may have to pay upfront and get reimbursed by your insurance.

Some healthcare providers such as Kaiser Permanente, if you are a member, you can request tests and they will mail to their members.

*Visit pharmacies websites to see eligibility or call Healthy Aging Association at (209) 525-4670.

When Should I Test for COVID-19

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19

- Test immediately, regardless of your COVID-19 vaccination status.
- If your test is negative but you continue to have symptoms, test again 24-48 hours later.

If you have had close contact with someone with COVID-19,

- Test when notified of exposure and 3-5 days after exposure, even if you have no symptoms.
- Test immediately if symptoms develop.

Consider testing before and 3-5 days after a gathering, a large event or travel, especially if you are going to be around people who are higher risk. (older adults, immunocompromised, unvaccinated people).

COVID-19 Testing Sites in Stanislaus County

Walk-up Testing. Quick and easy shallow nasal PCR Test. Results within 1-2 days from receipt of the sample. No appointment needed! No cost to insured or uninsured. If insured, please have insurance information ready.

Community Services Agency

251 E. Hackett Road, Modesto 95358
Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Briggsmore Plaza Kiosk

1800 Prescott Road, Modesto 95350
Wednesday – Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The following locations are open from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Blaker-Kinser Jr. High (Mondays)

1601 Kinser Road, Ceres 95307

County Center III (Tuesdays)

917 Oakdale Rd., Modesto 95355

Mae Hensley Jr. High (Wednesdays)

11806 Moffett Rd., Ceres 95307

Riverbank Community Center (Thursdays)

3600 Santa Fe St., Riverbank 95367

Caesar Chavez Jr. High School (Fridays)

2701 Eastgate Blvd., Ceres 95307

**COVID-19 Test to Treat Program – Make Appointment
(888) 634-1123**

There are two FREE Test to Treat Sites for uninsured individuals in Stanislaus County. These sites all allow individuals to get tested, be seen by a provider, and receive antiviral pills (if needed)

- **Salida Public Library** – 4835 Sisk Road, Salida, 95368
- **Rube Boesch Community Center** – 275 N. Orange Street, Turlock 95380



Vaccinations in Stanislaus County [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://www.myturn.ca.gov) or Call (883) 422-4255

Many pharmacies in Stanislaus County provide the COVID-19 vaccines/boosters. Please visit the pharmacy website to see if vaccines/booster are available and if you are eligible.

For those who are Uninsured Only - Stanislaus Public Health Immunization Clinic
401 Paradise Road, Suite E., Modesto, CA 95350

HOMEBOUND – If you are homebound, it is still important to get vaccinated. Call Healthy Aging Association at (209) 525-4670 to schedule your at home appointment today!



Our Mission is “to help older Americans live longer, healthier, more independent lives by promoting increased physical activity, sound health, and nutrition practices.”

Created and Edited by: Healthy Aging Association
3500 Coffee Road, Suite 19, Modesto CA 95355, (209) 525-4670
For Senior Information and Assistance contact (209) 558-8698

En español por favor llame (209) 525-4670

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who support our local COVID-19 response efforts.*

