

# Stay Informed While Staying Safe

## *A Newsletter in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*



### **New COVID Bivalent Booster Shot Could Save Your Life - GET ONE NOW!** *FDA Chief Medical Officer, Hilary Marston*

CDC recommends that older adults receive one updated (bivalent) booster if it has been at least 2 months since their last COVID-19 vaccine dose, whether that was;

- Their primary series doses, (2)
- The original (monovalent) booster

If you are moderately or severely immunocompromised (have a weakened immune system) you are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness and death.

The Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone get an updated COVID-19 Booster (Bivalent) to help restore protection that has decreased since your last vaccine.

According to an article in the Modesto Bee written by Ken Carlson, only 3% of eligible people in Stanislaus County have received the updated booster shot available after September 2nd leaving the vast majority without protection against omicron subvariants going into the winter months.

As of last Monday, the 31<sup>st</sup> only 14,258 adolescent (12 years and over) and adult residents had received the single-shot omicron booster, a County Health Service Agency spokesperson said. About 10% of seniors in the most vulnerable age group, 65 and older, are boosted against the omicron subvariants.

Hospital officials said it leaves the county open to a surge of illness and hospitalizations tied to omicron this winter.

A surge of omicron illness and influenza in the late fall and winter could be coming based on reasoning that people are indoors in colder months, they breathe the same air and infectious disease spreads, according to Dr. Kanthi Kiran, Medical Director, of Memorial Center's Emergency Department.

Kiran said she hears a misconception that COVID vaccines, in general, are not effective. She said it simply was not the case with COVID-19 surge that hit Modesto after COVID vaccines became widely available in the first half of 2021.

“After the vaccine rollout, more than 90% of the people I admitted to the hospital were not vaccinated,” Kiran said

## **TAKE ACTION: Give Good Health A Shot**

Flu vaccination has been shown to reduce the risk of getting sick with flu and to reduce the risk of more serious flu outcomes that can result in hospitalization or even death.

Although immune responses to vaccination may be lower in older adults, studies have consistently found that flu vaccine has been effective in reducing the risk of medical visits and hospitalizations in older people.



For the 2022-2023 season the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommend the use of higher dose Flu vaccines for people 65 years and older.

Medicare covers Flu Shots and COVID-19 vaccines at no cost to you!

***TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT (OR SHOTS) Now*** is the time to get your updated COVID-19 booster and your flu shot.

## **COVID-19 Stanislaus Community Level**

**Low**

### **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.

### **Weekly Metrics used to determine the COVID-19 Community Level**

Case Rate per 100,000 populations	<b><u>59.75</u></b>
New COVID-19 Admissions per 100,000	<b><u>6.1</u></b>
% Staff inpatient beds in use with confirmed COVID-19	<b><u>3.9</u></b>

### **% Vaccinated in Stanislaus County**

1 Dose **69.3%**                      2 Doses **58.3%**                      Booster Shots **25.6%**

Over the last week, Stanislaus County had 328 new reported cases (59.75 for every 100,000 residents) \* **Reported cases do not include all at home Positive Tests.**

**Choose to vaccinate!**  
**It's safe, free, and effective at preventing severe disease and deaths!**

## Why Now is the Time to Stock Up on At-Home Tests

“It is important to be proactive”, according to Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, an infectious disease and epidemiology specialist at Stanford. Which means testing every time you have COVID-19 symptoms or an exposure, as well as ahead of gatherings with people at risk of severe illness --- such as people over 65, or with an underlying condition or who are immunocompromised.



Flu, which is already off to an early start could be more severe this winter than typical pre-pandemic seasons. The symptoms of flu and COVID-19, as well as RSV, are often indistinguishable and include things like a cough, runny nose, sore throat, headache, and fatigue.

Flu tests are typically done by a healthcare provider, according to the (CDC) Center for Disease Control and Prevention. But an at-home rapid antigen test can be used to rule out COVID-19. It is important to know if you have COVID so you can isolate or be prescribed an antiviral, like Paxlovid, if you are eligible.

## Incorrect Expiration Date on the Outside of Test Kit Box - Check The Date on Your Fill Tube!

Your COVID-19 At Home Test Kit may give you an expiration date on the box, but don't be fooled, it's not the correct expiration date!!!

Once you look inside, the test strip and fill tube will show the accurate expiration date.

## Where You Can Get Tested

### **RT-PCR Tests for COVID-19**

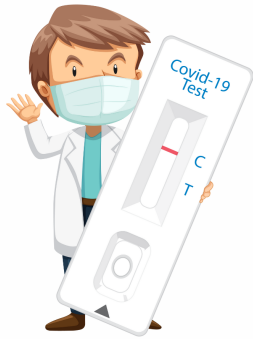
- Community Services Agency Kiosk – 251 E, Hackett Rd., Modesto 95358  
Closes at 2:00 p.m. (Walk-In)

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

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

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

## Where To Get Test Kits



Testing is important. If you are experiencing symptoms or have been recently exposed to COVID-19 you need to test at home or at a pharmacy who provides tests. Medicare, MediCal or private insurance, they will provide tests at No Charge to you.

You may also purchase in-home rapid antigen tests at the pharmacies paid by Medicare, MediCal or private insurance.

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

## Where Can I Get Vaccinated? [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://www.myturn.ca.gov) or Call (833) 422-4255

Please call the following for an appointment; Vaccines available to the public, you don't have to be a member;

Kaiser Permanente – (209) 735-5000

Sutter Health – (844) 987-6115

Stanislaus Public Health Immunization Clinic – Uninsured Only  
401 Paradise Rd. Suite E, Modesto

Many pharmacies in Stanislaus County provide the COVID-19 Primary and Booster Vaccines. Please visit the pharmacy website or [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://www.myturn.ca.gov) to see if vaccines are available and if you are eligible. Visit; [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://www.myturn.ca.gov) or call (833) 422-4255 to make an appointment.



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***

*Thank you to The Center at Sierra Health Foundation who support our local COVID-19 response efforts.*

