

From: CT Department of Public Health <noreply-dphimmunizations@ct.gov>

Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 2:36 PM

Subject: COVID Vaccine Provider Bulletin Week of May 10, 2021



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

Thank you again for your continued efforts in the COVID Vaccine roll-out. This email contains important information for COVID vaccine providers – please read this message in its entirety.

Expected Age Expansion for Pfizer Vaccine

On April 9, Pfizer submitted data to amend the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to expand the ages indicated for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to include children as young as 12 years old. The FDA is expected to offer approve an amendment to the Pfizer EUA in the next days, and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) is expected to make a recommendation this Wednesday, May 12. The meeting will be livestreamed [here](#). Agenda is available [here](#).

All providers who administer Pfizer vaccine should be prepared to update their schedulers, websites, and literature to indicate that individuals 12 and older are eligible when the EUA is amended AND ACIP issues its recommendation. The Department will follow up with further guidance and information about when administration of vaccines to individuals 12 and up can begin, but at this point, we are expecting to be able to begin on Thursday morning following Wednesday's ACIP meeting.

We encourage as many providers as possible to prepare to hold Pfizer clinics after the EUA amendment and ACIP recommendation is in place, including this upcoming weekend when individuals in this age group and parents can attend clinics.

CT WiZ downtime: Tonight at 8pm

On Monday **5/10/2021** CT WiZ will be down between 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm for a new release. Please plan your data entry and electronic querying accordingly.

UPDATED CDC Webpages and Clinician Resources

- All [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](#) webpages have been updated to reflect new higher dose vial information.
- Standing Orders for all three COVID-19 vaccines have been updated to reflect thrombosis-thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS) information as related to the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 Vaccine.
 - [Pfizer](#)
 - [Moderna](#)
 - [Janssen/J&J](#)
- The [Prevaccination Checklist](#) has also been edited to include TTS information.
- General information about COVID-19 vaccine products for clinicians and healthcare professionals can be found on the [COVID-19 Vaccination webpage](#).
- Clinical information including FAQs, Contraindications and Precautions as well as Administrative resources can be found for each vaccine on their own product webpage. Scrolling to the bottom of each vaccine specific webpage will bring you to a list of Storage and Handling Resources.
 - [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine](#)
 - [Moderna COVID-19 vaccine](#)
 - [Janssen/J&J COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- Recent updates to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Communication and Education Product Inventory
 - [FAQs for Private and Public Healthcare Providers About Implementing the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program in Provider Practices | CDC](#)
 - [Esperanza Health Centers Work to Deliver COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC](#)
 - [Common Questions about Budget Revisions \(Redirections\) | CDC](#)
 - [Risk Benefit Analysis \(cdc.gov\)](#)
 - [CDC Recommends Use of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Resume | CDC](#)

School Clinics

School leaders and local health directors are encouraged to continue coordinating with COVID Vaccine Providers to arrange Pfizer vaccine clinics for eligible students – currently 16+, but soon also 12+. The Department recommends that school leaders also plan for ways to provide access to Pfizer vaccine clinics to all eligible students. Approaches include:

- Host an on-site clinic in a school building
- Refer students and families to off-site vaccine clinics
- Reach out to the Department to discuss other school-specific strategies

Regardless of specific approach, we have learned in recent weeks that school-supported clinics are a highly effective way to serve our younger populations. If you would like help matching your

school(s) with a CoVP provider and arranging student vaccine clinics — or if you have questions regarding how to effectively communicate with students and families to ensure maximum coverage — please reach out to Cameron Cross at: Cameron.Cross@ct.gov.

Hospital Discharge Vaccination

All acute care hospitals should be offering COVID-19 vaccines to all individuals upon discharge to skilled nursing and assisted living facilities by May 17th. Hospitals should offer the J&J vaccine, but may offer an mRNA vaccine if an individual refuses the J&J vaccine. We will work with long term care pharmacy partners and other providers to ensure the individual receives their second dose of mRNA vaccine.

Hospitals are encouraged to offer vaccines in their emergency departments as well. Hospitals may offer the J&J vaccine or an mRNA vaccine. Hospitals should not be discouraged from offering mRNA vaccines due to concern for loss of follow up. Hospitals should do their best to recall patients for second doses, but it is understood that some may be lost to follow-up.

REMINDERS

Monitoring COVID Vaccine Expiration Dates

Providers should make sure to continue to monitor expiration dates for COVID-19 vaccines. Specifically, providers are encouraged to check the expiration dates for J&J vaccines and ensure they are administering vaccine on a “first in first out” out basis to avoid expiration, as many lots of the J&J vaccine have expiration dates that are sooner than those on the mRNA vaccines. Please report vaccines due to expire within 30 days to the COVID-19 vaccine [ordering portal](#) so we can facilitate potential transfer of the vaccine to another CoVP Provider to avoid wastage. Please report this information to the ordering portal even if you are not placing an order on that particular week.

Information on how to determine the expiration data is available for each vaccine below.

Janssen: The expiration date is NOT printed on the vaccine vial or carton. To determine the expiration date: Scan the QR code on the outer carton, or call 1-800-565-4008, or visit www.vaxcheck.jnj.

Pfizer: Use CDC's beyond-use date labels for this vaccine to track storage time at refrigerated and frozen temperatures.

Moderna: Scan the QR code on the vial or carton, enter the lot number, and the expiration date will be displayed, or visit [http:// www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua](http://www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua).

National Guard deployments

Please note that all National Guard deployments to support vaccine sites will be winding down by May 31. The vast majority of COVID Vaccine Providers use no national guard members or, where national guard members have been deployed, have transitioned to in-house staffing models.

Providers who still have national guard members deployed should make plans to transition to alternative staffing models no later than May 31.

To assist you, the DPH has compiled multiple options for staffing mass vaccination sites which can be found at: [Staffing Resources for COVID-19 Vaccination Sites \(ct.gov\)](#). The web page is updated regularly. We have heard from many nursing programs across CT, whose students are hungry for field-based experience. Additionally, over 1,600 professionals have been trained to administer COVID-19 vaccines, and there are over 11,000 licensed practitioners who have offered to assist (many for little to no pay). These individuals can assist in vaccinators roles, providing support for medical records or appointments, post-vaccine monitoring, or as greeters/traffic control. Please contact Francesca Provenzano (Francesca.Provenzano@ct.gov) and Bill Gerrish (William.Gerrish@ct.gov) for any questions or support.

Moderna vaccine: new 15 dose vials and storage and handling updates

The Moderna vaccine will be available in two different vials by early May: the current maximum 11 dose vial and a new maximum 15 dose vial. **The vial will remain the same size but will be filled to the higher volume.**

- A new NDC has been issued for the larger volume Moderna vial, which has been given a range of 13-15 doses in the EUA.
- Moderna is planning to transition all manufacturing to the new vial during the month of May. During the month, providers may receive vaccines that include vials of either quantity.
- The larger volume vial may contain 15 doses of vaccine. However, it will not always be possible to extract the 15th dose. This is based on the overfill in the vial and the type of syringes used to administer the vaccine. Therefore, vaccination providers should expect to withdraw 13-15 doses from each vial.
- Each dose must contain 0.5mL of vaccine.
- When the amount of vaccine remaining in the vial is not a complete 0.5mL dose, discard the vial and the residual vaccine regardless of the number of doses withdrawn. Do NOT save vials to combine residual vaccine from more than one vial to get a complete dose. An unextracted 15th dose does NOT count as waste.
- Vaccination sites should continue to reliably extract 10 doses from the current volume vial and plan to extract 14 doses from the new larger volume vial using the ancillary kit supplies provided.
- Inability to draw 14 or fewer doses from a 15 dose vial should be reported as wastage (please report through submitting a ticket to [Helpdesk](#)).

- Ancillary kits will be reconfigured to extract 14 doses per vial, plus a 5% surplus to account for damage, wastage, or additional doses.

Moderna updates to storage and handling

- Frozen Vaccine Moderna vials can now be stored frozen between -50° to -15°C (-58° to 5°F). This is an increased range from the original temperatures. This new, wider temperature range is consistent with temperature requirements for other recommended vaccines stored in the freezer.
- Vials may be stored between 8° to 25°C (46° to 77°F) for a total of 24 hours. This is an increase from 12 hours.
- Punctured vials may be held between 2° to 25°C (36° to 77°F) for up to 12 hours. Vials should be discarded 12 hours after the first puncture. This is an increase from 6 hours.

The updated [Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers](#) (rev 4/23/2021) should be furnished to all vaccine recipients.

- Providers are reminded that the type of vaccine on offer should be transparent to the patient at the time of scheduling. Individuals who do not find the type of vaccine they prefer at a site should be provided with resources for how to schedule at a site with their preferred vaccine type. Patients can be directed to covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov to locate sites based on vaccine type.
- Janssen vaccine may again be used by hospitals discharging patients to skilled nursing facilities and assisted living facilities, as well as other settings depending upon available supplies.

Please continue to encourage patients to register for [V-safe](#); report adverse events to [VAERS](#).

Avoiding vaccine wastage

Several CoVP providers have contacted us with concerns over potentially wasting COVID-19 vaccines should they puncture a vial and not be able to use each dose within the needed timeframe.

While vaccinators should still do their utmost to avoid vaccine wastage, concerns about wastage should not be a barrier to providing COVID-19 vaccines to willing recipients presenting for appointments or walk-ups.

Please continue to use creative strategies to avoid wastage, such as shared waitlists, phoning or texting those with appointments in coming days to present early, actively inviting in individuals who are in the vicinity (e.g., some providers have made PA announcements for grocery store-located pharmacies), etc. Continue to report vaccine wastage to the DPH [Helpdesk](#).

Check your listing

Providers are reminded to check their listing at covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov. If any corrections are needed, please email Caroline.Hou@ct.gov.

In addition, providers offering walk-up appointments should also email Caroline to be included in marketing and promotion of walk-up appointments. Provider locations with walk up appointments are listed at ct.gov/covidvaccine/walkup.

Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours

- **Weekly CoVP Update**

Provides CoVP Vaccinating Providers updates on the CoVP Program and Q&A with DPH staff. **Wednesdays** 9:00am-10:00am; Join: [CoVP Office Hours](#)

- **CoVP CT WiZ Enrollment Office Hours**

Provides information about the CoVP enrollment process in CT WiZ and Q&A with DPH staff. **Mondays & Thursdays** 12:00pm-12:30pm; Join: [CoVP CT WiZ Enrollment Office Hours](#)

- **Vaccine Storage and Handling Assessment**

For clinics who completed CoVP enrollment and received an invite to attend. **Tuesdays & Thursdays** 10:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-2:00pm; By invitation Only

- **VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours**

Clinics can ask questions about VAMS functionality to DPH staff. **Tuesdays** 9:00am 10:00am (*NEW Hours*) and **Thursdays** – 1:00pm – 2:00pm (*NEW Hours*); Join: [VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours](#)

Visit: [VAMS Training \(ct.gov\)](#) and [CT WiZ Training](#) for VAMS enhancement release notes and training materials on VAMS and CT WiZ.

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