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Hochul encourages New Yorkers to get new COVID-19 vaccine as students return to school & respiratory illness season begins

Governor and state health commissioner expand access to 2024-25 COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible New Yorkers without need for prescription

▼ CDC recommends new COVID-19 vaccine for all ages 6 months and older who are two-months past last vaccine
▼ New Yorkers also encouraged to get their annual flu shot and to ask providers about RSV Vaccine; now available in most pharmacies
Submitted by the Office of Gov. Kathy Hochul
Gov. Kathy Hochul announced the new COVID-19 vaccine for the 2024-25 season is now available in New York. She encouraged all eligible New Yorkers - especially those who are 65 and older, are at risk for severe COVID-19, or have never received a COVID-19 vaccine - to get the vaccine as students return to school, and ahead of the respiratory illness season.
The governor and New York State Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald also announced the commissioner's standing order allowing all eligible New Yorkers to receive the new COVID-19 vaccine at any pharmacy in New York without a prescription from their individual health care provider.
"Now is the time to get the new COVID-19 vaccine to help protect your family and your community," Hochul said. "As in years' past, we're putting health first and

making it easy for all eligible New Yorkers to get the new vaccine at any pharmacy statewide."
The 2024-25 COVID-19 vaccines are now available following the Food and Drug Administration's recent approval of the Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax vaccines. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced on Friday that the vaccines are being shipped to health care providers and pharmacies. Major retail pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens, are now taking appointments and some locations may accept walk-ins.
McDonald said, "Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is the most effective protection against being admitted to a hospital or suffering from long COVID, so I'm once again encouraging all those eligible to prioritize their health and get vaccinated. As we enter the fall season, when respiratory viruses circulate, New Yorkers should get the vaccine to protect themselves from COVID-19 so they can risk less and live well."
The CDC has recommended the 2024-25 COVID-19 vaccines for everyone 6 months and older who has not received a COVID-19 vaccine in the past two months to protect against potentially

serious illness from COVID-19. Recommended dosages and the schedule vary depending on age, immune status and COVID-19 vaccine history.
Under the Affordable Care Act, most private health insurance, Medicare and Medicaid plans cover COVID-19 vaccines without cost-sharing when received at an in-network provider or pharmacy. Those who are uninsured, or whose insurance does not cover the updated vaccine, will have access to the shots free of charge through community health centers or local health departments participating in the New York State Department of Health Vaccines for Adults program.
The Department of Health's Office of Aging and Long-Term Care and the Office of Public Health have taken several steps to protect long-term care (LTC) facility residents and their staff by reiterating the importance of vaccination for all consenting residents and health care personnel, as well as implementing infection control and prevention measures.
The department also encourages LTC facilities to provide flu and RSV shots to residents in addition to the updated COVID-19 vaccine. These are three separate vac-

inations. Consistent with CDC guidelines, it is safe to get all three vaccines at the same time.
The general public is also encouraged to ask their health care provider about receiving other vaccines they may be eligible for, including flu and RSV.
The Department's Wadsworth Center continues the vital strategies of wastewater surveillance, conducted with partners at Syracuse University and others across the state, as well as sequencing of clinical specimens, to understand variant spread and the potential impact on public health. Current wastewater surveillance also indicates a decrease in the prevalence of the virus.
The flu, RSV and COVID-19 are contagious, respiratory viral infections that can have similar symptoms, making it difficult to distinguish between the three illnesses. People with chronic conditions, including those that affect the lungs and heart, young children, elderly populations and pregnant people, have a higher risk of developing serious complications from the flu, COVID-19 and RSV.

IN THE NEWS

Morinello & HART to host joint Alzheimer's awareness event

Press Release
Assemblyman Angelo Morinello announced he will host an Alzheimer's Awareness event from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sept. 25 at the Golden Age Center located at 3278 Whitehaven Road. The event will be aimed at educating the community on the top 10 early signs of dementia/Alzheimer's, understanding the disease and empowering caregivers.
Home Assistance Referral Team will jointly host this event, as HART aims to connect seniors and others with qualified care, allowing them to remain indepen-

dent in their own homes.
The event will feature expert speakers in the field of Alzheimer's and dementia care, who will provide information on how to recognize the early warning signs of dementia, including memory loss, confusion and changes in behavior.
Morinello's team said, "Understanding these signs is crucial for early diagnosis and intervention, which can help manage the symptoms and improve the quality of life for those affected."
He added, "Alzheimer's disease affects countless families

in our community. It's essential we provide the necessary resources and support to those who are impacted. By educating ourselves on the early signs and understanding the disease, we can better support our loved ones and ensure they receive the care they need."
The press release added, "In addition to discussing the signs and symptoms of dementia, the event will also focus on the challenges faced by families in search of caregivers. Caregivers play a critical role in the lives of those living with Alzheimer's,

often shouldering the emotional, physical and financial burdens of care. The event will provide practical advice and resources to help caregivers navigate these challenges, as well as information on local support groups and services available to them.
"Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions, share their experiences and connect with others who are facing similar challenges. The event is open to the public, and all are encouraged to attend."

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