

UNMASK THE FACTS

June 2023

June 15, 2023

FDA panel recommends making a COVID-19 vaccine aimed only at the XBB variant this fall

The FDA voted to update COVID-19 vaccines for the fall. The new vaccine will protect against just one strain of the virus and will target the XBB.1.5 strain, which is currently the most common variant in the U.S. The updated vaccines could be available in September. The FDA is also trying to decide if everyone should get the updated vaccine, or just people who are at high risk of getting sick.

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June 6, 2023

COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy might not directly translate to fewer routine childhood vaccinations

A recent study claims that parents' fears surrounding the COVID-19 vaccines for children might have made routine childhood vaccines seem safer by comparison. A little more than one-third (35% to 42%) of the U.S. public believes COVID-19 vaccines are "very safe" for children. However, public attitudes on the safety of routine childhood vaccines have risen during the COVID-19 pandemic (from around 60% believing they are "very safe" pre-pandemic to 70% in late 2022).

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June 1, 2023

More than 70% of COVID-19 spread in U.S. households started with a child

A [study](#) published early last month suggests that 70.4% of nearly 850,000 U.S. household COVID-19 transmissions started with a child. Younger kids (those who were 8 years old or younger) were more likely to spread the virus than older kids (7.6% vs 5.8%). Generally, though, children caused more household transmissions during the school year than they did during summer and winter breaks.

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June 22, 2023

Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech requests FDA authorization for their updated COVID-19 vaccines

Both [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) and [Moderna](#) have applied to get the FDA's okay for their updated COVID-19 vaccines. The new versions of these vaccines aim to provide defense against the XBB.1.5 strain. Unlike the bivalent vaccines, these shots do not also target the original Alpha strain. Only 17% of the U.S. has received the updated bivalent shot since it came out last year. Getting people to get another shot this fall might be a challenge for health officials.

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June 15, 2023

Bridge Access Program will provide COVID-19 vaccines to the uninsured through December 2024

This fall's updated COVID-19 vaccines will be available directly from the manufacturers, rather than through the government. Uninsured kids will be able to get these vaccines for free through the [Vaccines for Children \(VFC\) program](#). Uninsured adults will be able to get them through the [Bridge Access Program for COVID-19 Vaccines and Treatments](#). The program will use the existing public health infrastructure and partnerships with pharmacy chains to continue to offer free COVID-19 vaccines to uninsured adults.

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