

UNMASK THE FACTS

November 29 – December 12

December 10, 2021

CDC expands COVID-19 booster shots to cover teens 16 and 17 years old

The CDC expanded recommendations for booster shots to now include 16- and 17-year-olds. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is the only vaccine authorized and recommended for this age group. All teens who are 16 and 17 years old may get a booster shot of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine at least 6 months after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series. Initial data suggests that COVID-19 booster shots help strengthen protection against severe illness from Omicron and other variants.

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December 11, 2021

COVID-19 cases from the Omicron variant increase sevenfold in the U.S.

While Delta remains by far the most dominant variant on a national scale in the United States, the percentage of new cases attributed to Omicron has increased from 0.4% on December 4 to 2.9% on December 11. Overall, this data shows a sevenfold increase in Omicron cases. The [first confirmed case](#) of the Omicron variant detected in the United States was identified two weeks ago in California. [Preliminary evidence](#) suggests that booster shots can help protect against this variant, but more research is needed.

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November 17, 2021

FDA authorizes additional pre- and post-exposure treatments for COVID-19

The U.S. FDA recently [revised the EUA of bamlanivimab and etesevimab](#), two monoclonal antibodies given together to treat COVID-19, to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 in all younger pediatric patients, including newborns, who have a positive COVID-19 test and are at high risk for severe COVID-19. The antibodies can also be used as post-exposure prevention for all pediatric patients. Additionally, the FDA issued an EUA for AstraZeneca's Evusheld to be used to help prevent COVID-19 in [certain adults and pediatric individuals](#).

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December 9, 2021

FDA updates the impact of viral mutations on the effectiveness of COVID-19 tests

The FDA announced that some COVID-19 tests are differently affected by viral mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus due to the inherent design differences of each test. The FDA's analysis to date has identified certain EUA-authorized molecular tests whose performance may be impacted by mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant. The agency identified at least two tests with reduced ability to detect this variant: the Revogene SARS-CoV-2 by Meridian Bioscience and the DTPM COVID-19 RT-PCR Test by Tide Laboratories.

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December 6, 2021

CDC intensifies testing requirement for international travel into the U.S.

All air passengers flying into the U.S., regardless of vaccination status, must show a negative COVID-19 test taken **no more than one day before travel** or provide documentation of recovery from a [recent COVID-19 infection](#). One day **does not mean 24 hours** though. If your flight departs at 5 p.m. on Friday, you can take your test at any time on Thursday or before your flight on Friday. This new requirement replaces a previous rule that allowed travelers to take a pre-departure test no more than 72 hours (3 days) before flying.

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