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**Health Department of Northwest Michigan**

### **COVID-19 Omicron Booster Available Locally**

*HDNW clinics scheduling appointments for people 12 years and up*

Have you been wondering about a COVID-19 booster? Are you planning to get your annual flu shot or [other immunization](#)?

If so, the new Omicron Booster is available at Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) clinics, and it may be given at the same appointment as a flu vaccine. The single-dose Omicron Booster is authorized for anyone 12 years and older who completed the initial COVID-19 series at least eight weeks ago. The new booster may be used regardless of which type of primary vaccines residents have gotten.

The updated COVID-19 booster includes components from the original virus strain and the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron variants. The Pfizer booster is approved for anyone 12 years and older regardless of underlying medical conditions. Children under 12 should continue with their primary COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters, according to this American Medical Association [video update](#).

“Because the Omicron Booster has both the original vaccine strain and the currently circulating Omicron variants that are causing most of the current infections in our area, it may provide better and more durable protection against future infections,” said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, HDNW Medical Director. “Updating vaccines is common. The public is familiar with the practice of getting an annual flu vaccination because it contains the latest strains that have been circulating. The same approach is being used to improve the COVID-19 booster.”

When the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) authorized use of the [Omicron Booster Aug. 31](#), it did so based on data showing that the BA.4 and BA.5 lineages of the Omicron variant are currently causing most cases of COVID-19 in the U.S., and they are predicted to continue circulating this fall and winter.

“The COVID-19 vaccines, including boosters, continue to save lives and prevent the most serious illnesses and deaths,” said Dr. Meyerson. “As we head into fall and begin to spend more time indoors, we strongly encourage anyone who is eligible to consider receiving the new booster to provide better protection against the circulating variants.”

### **Scheduling the Booster**

The Omicron Booster has replaced the original booster formulas. Individuals may get the booster, manufactured by both Pfizer and Moderna, regardless of which primary series vaccine or original booster dose they previously received.

*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties.*

*For more information, visit [nwhealth.org](http://nwhealth.org).*

Residents wanting to schedule both an [Omicron Booster](#) and a flu shot for the same day should schedule an appointment for a HDNW immunization clinic. COVID-19 only clinics do not offer other vaccinations.

To schedule a flu shot or other [general immunization](#) like Tetanus, Hepatitis A and B, Shingles, Meningitis or other, call 800-432-4121. To schedule an Omicron Booster only, visit <http://nwhealth.org/covid19imm.html>. There are clinics scheduled in Charlevoix, Mancelona, Gaylord, and Harbor Springs next week with appointments available for children and adults.

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