



KENT COUNTY Health Department

Explanation of Vaccines for the 2023/2024 Respiratory Virus and Flu Season

Annual Influenza Vaccine (Flu)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an annual Influenza vaccine for individuals 6 months and older. For the 2023-2024 Influenza season there has been an update to the composition of the vaccine due to the evolving nature of the viruses. Individuals should start receiving their flu vaccine in September and October. Physicians should be offering flu vaccine to patients by the end of October.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine

Each year RSV causes substantial illness in older adults and is the leading cause of hospitalization among infants in the United States. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and CDC have made three RSV immunizing products available to our most vulnerable populations.

Adults 60 and Over

There are two RSV vaccines, that have been approved for adults 60 years of age and older. These vaccines are administered as a single dose and have demonstrated moderate to high efficacy in preventing symptomatic RSV associated over two consecutive RSV seasons. For the 2023-2024 RSV season, the RSV vaccine should be administered as early as vaccine supply is available.

Infants

According to the CDC, RSV is the leading cause of infant hospitalization in the U.S. There are two options to protect infants. Most babies need only one but not both.

In August the [CDC recommended a new RSV immunization](#) for all infants aged less than 8 months who are born during or entering their first RSV season and for infants and children aged 8-19 months who are at increased risk for severe RSV disease and are entering their second RSV

season. In clinical trials, one dose of nirsevimab protected infants for 5 months and reduced the risk of severe RSV disease by 80%.

In September, another new vaccine was approved. It is a bivalent vaccine, called Abrysvo, for use in pregnant individuals to protect their newborn from severe RSV illness. This vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of RSV hospitalization for babies by 57% in the first six months after birth. A single dose of vaccine is to be administered during weeks 32 through 36 of pregnancy.

COVID-19 Vaccine

The 2023-2024 formula for COVID-19 vaccine is making its way into public and private sectors for administration. The roll out for public inventory has been slower than originally anticipated.

mRNA vaccine products have been approved or granted EUA provisions for ages 6 months and older. Recommendations for use of the 2023-2024 formulations for mRNA products include a single dose for everyone ages 5 years and older. Children 6 months to 4 years should begin their primary series or receive 1-2 doses depending on the number of prior doses administered. For people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, recommendations are outlined in the CDC's "Use of COVID-19 Vaccines in the United States Clinical Considerations".

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is currently authorized for use. Bivalent mRNA vaccines are no longer recommended for use in the United States.

The Kent County Health Department will be offering these vaccines to the public as inventory and additional information becomes available. The Kent County website will also be updated as vaccine becomes available at [Immunizations | Kent County, Michigan \(accesskent.com\)](https://www.accesskent.com/immunizations)