

Dear Community Partners,

We trust this email finds you well. As we approach the holiday season, we wanted to reach out to you as a valued partner in our community. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has recently shared crucial updates regarding the fall and winter virus season, along with vaccination recommendations. We believe that your organization's influence can play a vital role in disseminating this information to the diverse communities you serve.

To assist facilitate your communication efforts, we have compiled a set of resources, including press releases, infographics, and informative links, which you can share through your organization's communication channels, including social media. These resources cover topics such as:

Vaccination Recommendations: MDHHS encourages residents to get vaccinated to ensure community safety. [Read more](#)

COVID Testing Options: Information on testing options to help individuals stay informed about their health status. [Explore details](#)

Fall 2023 Vaccines: Updates on the latest vaccine recommendations to address current health concerns. [Learn more](#)

Additionally, there are resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including tools and messages to prepare for flu, COVID-19, and Respiratory syncytial virus ([RSV](#)). These resources can be accessed through the Bridge Access Program Toolkit [here](#).

Our Communications team has provided talking points to enhance your outreach efforts. Some key highlights include:

Vaccination Encouragement:

- Emphasize the safety and efficacy of vaccines in preventing the spread of respiratory illnesses.
- Share success stories from individuals within your community who have received the vaccine.
- Highlight the convenience of local vaccination sites and the availability of various vaccine options.
- The Bridge Access Program is only for underinsured and uninsured populations, and only available at select pharmacies.
 - Program Information [HERE](#)
 - Find A Location [HERE](#)

Testing Awareness:

- Stress the importance of regular [COVID testing](#) to detect and prevent the spread of the virus.
- Inform community members about the Free at-home COVID-19 tests (4 per household) and the updated expiration date list:

- Order [HERE](#)
- Search by Manufacturer [HERE](#)
- Provide information on accessible [testing locations](#) within your community.
- Encourage individuals to get tested, especially before gatherings and events.

Community Engagement:

- Invite community members to stay informed by subscribing to your newsletters for regular updates.
- Utilize social media platforms to share accurate and timely information about vaccinations, testing, and health resources.
- Foster a sense of community responsibility in adhering to health guidelines.

Diversity and Inclusion:

- Emphasize the importance of reaching out to all community members, including those from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Share information on specific resources available for minority populations, addressing any unique concerns they may have.

Combating Misinformation:

- Empower community leaders, influencers, and faith-based figures to address and correct vaccine-related misinformation.
- Encourage open dialogue within the community to address concerns and questions about vaccines, fostering a culture of informed decision-making.

We invite you to utilize these resources and talking points to empower your community with the knowledge needed to make informed health decisions. Your organization's support is invaluable in promoting vaccine safety and encouraging residents to stay up to date with their vaccinations.

Feel free to share this information through your organization's newsletters, social media platforms, or any other communication channels you find effective.

Thank you for your dedication to community health, and we look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts.

Best regards,

Office of Equity and Minority Health (OEMH)
Office of Race Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI)
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)
Email: MDHHS-OEMH@michigan.gov

www.michigan.gov/minorityhealth

Adults can get COVID-19 vaccines at no cost to them!

The distribution of COVID-19 vaccines changed in September 2023 as these products moved the commercial market.

COVID-19 vaccines are still available at no cost to most people living in the U.S. through their private health insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid plans. However, there are **25-30 million adults without health insurance and additional adults whose insurance** does not offer COVID-19 vaccines at no cost to them.

CDC's Bridge Access Program provides no-cost COVID-19 vaccines to adults without health insurance and adults whose insurance does not cover all COVID-19 vaccine costs.



Who can get a no-cost COVID-19 vaccine through this program?

- Adults 18 years and older without health insurance and adults with health insurance that does not provide zero-cost access to COVID-19 vaccines.

The Bridge Access Program will provide no-cost COVID-19 vaccines to eligible adults through **December 31, 2024.**



All CDC-recommended updated COVID-19 vaccines are included in the Bridge Access Program.



Where can someone get a no-cost COVID-19 vaccine through the Bridge Access Program?

Local health providers partnered with state and local health departments*†



HRSA-supported health centers partnered with state and local immunization programs*†



Select **pharmacies:**

CVS, Walgreens, and eTrueNorth



Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find a provider that offers no-cost COVID-19 vaccines through the Bridge Access Program.



Community events or pop-up sites with these groups

*Providers must be enrolled in your health department's 317 program and participating in CDC's Bridge Access Program.

†Members of Federally-recognized Tribes can also get no-cost COVID-19 vaccines at Indian Health Service, Tribal or Urban Indian \ Health Program facilities, regardless of the provider's enrollment status with CDC's Bridge Access Program.

Questions or want to learn more?

Visit cdc.gov/vaccines/bridge

Older Adults Are at High Risk for Severe RSV Illness

Respiratory Syncytial Virus, or RSV, is a common virus that affects the lungs and breathing passages

- ✓ **RSV vaccine is available to adults 60 and over**
- ✓ **It can PROTECT against severe illness**
- ✓ **Talk to your doctor to see if vaccination is right for you**

RSV can be dangerous for older adults

Adults who are 60 years or older are at highest risk, especially:

- Adults who have chronic heart or lung disease
- Adults who have weakened immune systems

RSV can lead to serious conditions

- Pneumonia (infection of the lungs)
- Hospitalization
- More severe symptoms for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- More severe symptoms for people with congestive heart failure

Everyday preventive measures help protect against respiratory viruses

- Wash hands often
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Clean frequently touched surfaces
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Stay home when sick



EACH YEAR RSV

**causes
serious illness
in older adults**

**60,000–160,000
hospitalizations**

**6,000–10,000
deaths**



www.cdc.gov/rsv

Los adultos mayores tienen alto riesgo de enfermarse gravemente por el VRS

El virus respiratorio sincitial, o **VRS**, es un virus común que afecta los pulmones y las vías respiratorias

- ✓ La vacuna contra el VRS está disponible para los adultos de 60 años o más
- ✓ Puede **PROTEGER** contra la enfermedad grave
- ✓ Hable con su médico para ver si vacunarse es adecuado para usted

El VRS puede ser peligroso para los adultos mayores

Los adultos que tengan 60 años o más están en mayor riesgo, especialmente:

- los adultos con enfermedad cardíaca o pulmonar crónica
- los adultos con el sistema inmunitario debilitado

El VRS puede causar graves afecciones

- Neumonía (infección de los pulmones)
- Hospitalización
- Síntomas más graves para las personas con enfermedad pulmonar obstructiva crónica (epoc)
- Síntomas más graves para las personas con insuficiencia cardíaca congestiva

Las medidas de prevención diarias ayudan a proteger contra los virus respiratorios

- Lávese las manos a menudo
- Evite el contacto cercano con personas enfermas
- Evite tocarse la cara sin haberse lavado las manos
- Cúbrase la nariz y la boca al toser y estornudar
- Limpie las superficies que se tocan con frecuencia
- Quédese en casa cuando esté enfermo



CADA AÑO EL
VRS

causa enfermedad grave en los adultos mayores

de 60 000 a 160 000 hospitalizaciones

de 6000 a 10 000 muertes



espanol.cdc.gov/rsv

Fall and Winter Virus Season

Stop the spread of viruses by washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home if feeling unwell.

	VACCINES	PROTECTIVE ANTIBODIES	TESTING	THERAPEUTICS
INFLUENZA 	Available for ages 6 months and up.	N/A	Available in clinical settings.	Available.
COVID-19 	Available for ages 6 months and up.	N/A	At-home tests or tests in clinical settings.*	Available.
RSV 	Available for ages 60 years and up or for pregnant people.	Available for infants.	Recommended for certain high-risk groups.	Limited; only for certain high-risk groups.

Speak to your health care provider or visit Michigan.gov/COVIDFluRSV for more information.

**Order free at-home tests at COVIDTests.org.*

RSV in Infants and Young Children

Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is a common virus that affects the lungs. RSV season starts in the fall and peaks in the winter in most regions of the U.S.

Protect your young child from RSV.

There are two options to protect babies from severe RSV. Most babies only need one, not both.

RSV vaccine given during pregnancy:

- Protection passed to baby during pregnancy
- Recommended when 32-36 weeks pregnant
- Usually given during September-January

RSV antibody given to the baby:

- Directly provides protection to baby
- Recommended for babies younger than 8 months
- Usually given during October-March

A dose of RSV antibody is also recommended for the following children between the ages of 8 and 19 months entering their second RSV season:

- Children who have chronic lung disease from being born prematurely
- Children who are severely immunocompromised
- Children with cystic fibrosis who have severe disease
- American Indian and Alaska Native children

Talk to your healthcare provider to determine which option is best for you and your baby.



**RSV is the
LEADING CAUSE
of infant
hospitalization
in the U.S.**



www.cdc.gov/rsv

El VRS en los bebés y niños pequeños

El virus respiratorio sincitial, o VRS, es un virus común que afecta los pulmones. En la mayoría de las regiones de los EE. UU., la temporada del VRS comienza en el otoño y alcanza su punto máximo en el invierno.

Proteja a su hijo pequeño del VRS.

Hay dos opciones para proteger a los bebés para que no se enfermen gravemente por el VRS. La mayoría de los bebés solo necesitan una de las dos.

La **vacuna contra el VRS** administrada durante el embarazo:

- protección que se pasa al bebé durante el embarazo
- se recomienda entre las semanas 32 y 36 del embarazo
- por lo general se administra de septiembre a enero

Los **anticuerpos contra el VRS** administrados al bebé:

- proporcionan protección directamente al bebé
- se recomiendan para bebés menores de 8 meses
- por lo general se administran de octubre a marzo

También se recomienda una dosis de anticuerpos contra el VRS para los siguientes niños de entre 8 y 19 meses de edad que estén entrando en su segunda temporada del VRS:

- niños con enfermedad de los pulmones crónica por haber nacido de manera prematura
- niños gravemente inmunodeprimidos
- niños con fibrosis quística que tienen un caso grave de la enfermedad
- niños indígenas de los EE. UU. y nativos de Alaska

Hable con su proveedor de atención médica para determinar cuál es la mejor opción para usted y su bebé.



**El VRS es la
CAUSA PRINCIPAL
de hospitalizaciones
infantiles en los
EE. UU.**



espanol.cdc.gov/rsv