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Whiteside County Health Department Update on Boosters

October 26, 2021 – On Thursday October 21, 2021 the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H., [endorsement of the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' \(ACIP\) recommendation for a booster shot](#) for certain Moderna and Johnson and Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine recipients 18 years of age and older. These recommendations followed the [Food and Drug Administration's \(FDA\) authorization](#) and have been adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH).

The FDA authorization, CDC and IDPH recommendations expand eligibility for booster shots for all three available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States to individuals at highest risk for COVID-19 to help increase their protection.

Individuals who completed the primary series of **Moderna** or **Pfizer-BioNTech/ COMIRNATY COVID-19 vaccines** at least 6 months ago are eligible to receive a booster shot if they are:

- 65 years and older
- Age 18+ who live in [long-term care settings](#)
- Age 18+ who have [underlying medical conditions](#)
- Age 18+ who work or live in [high-risk settings](#)

All individuals age 18 and older who received the **Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine** two or more months ago are eligible to receive a single booster shot.

In addition to the guidance above regarding booster shots, the CDC stated that the use of each of the COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States as a heterologous (or "mix and match") booster shot vaccination with a different available COVID-19 vaccine, following completion of the primary series, is allowable. Heterologous dosing ("mix and match") may only be considered for booster shots and is not allowable for the primary series. For example, if someone received 2 doses of Pfizer 6 months ago, they may get a booster shot of Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson.

As indicated by the CDC, millions of people are now eligible to receive a booster shot and will benefit from additional protection. However, the CDC also reminds individuals that more than 65 million Americans remain unvaccinated, leaving themselves – and their children, families, loved ones, and communities– vulnerable.

Currently, data shows that all three of the [COVID-19 vaccines approved or authorized in the United States](#) continue to be [highly effective](#) in reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, even against the widely circulating [Delta variant](#). Vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself and reduce the spread of the virus and help prevent new variants from emerging.

The Whiteside County Health Department is now also offering Pfizer, Moderna, J&J booster shots by walk-in Monday-Friday 8:30am to 4pm. Individuals may also contact their healthcare provider or visit [vaccines.gov](#) to find vaccination locations near them.

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