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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

To: Local Media

From: Katrina Harwood, Health Officer

Date: October 17th, 2022

COVID-19 Bivalent Vaccine Booster Doses Authorized for 5-11 Year Olds

Rock County, WI – The Rock County Public Health Department and Wisconsin Department of Health Services both support the recent FDA authorization and CDC recommendation of bivalent COVID-19 vaccines for use as a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose for those 5-11 years old. Bivalent COVID-19 booster doses are now recommended for everyone 5 and older.

On October 12, the FDA amended the emergency use authorization for the bivalent Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 “updated booster” vaccines to authorize use in those 5-11 years old. The bivalent vaccine recommended for those 5-11 years old has the same formulation as the previously authorized bivalent vaccine recommended for those 12 and older. The bivalent vaccines contain two components of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Each updated booster includes a component of the original strain of the virus that provides an immune response that is broadly protective, and a component that protects against the omicron variant of the virus.

The authorization of the bivalent vaccine for those 5-11 is supported by extensive analysis of immune response and safety data from multiple clinical studies evaluating the effectiveness of the new bivalent booster doses in adult populations, and the monovalent (single component) booster doses in pediatric age groups.

The current eligibility guidelines for each updated booster dose include the following:

Moderna

- Individuals 6 years and older AND
- At least 2 months since primary vaccination or most recent booster dose with any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine

Pfizer

- Individuals 5 years and older AND
- At least 2 months since primary vaccination or most recent booster dose with any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine

With the authorization of the bivalent vaccines in this age group, the monovalent Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is no longer available as a booster dose for those ages 5-11. Both the Moderna and Pfizer monovalent vaccines continue to be authorized and are available for primary series administration.

The Rock County Public Health Department anticipates being able to offer the updated booster doses for those 5-11 years old within the next week at their Janesville location located at 3328 N US Hwy 51. Until then, check with local pharmacies and other providers in Rock County for vaccine availability.

The Rock County Public Health Department encourages Rock County residents to take advantage of the updated booster doses when eligible. To explore other Rock County options for vaccination, visit [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). For transportation assistance, phone 211 to arrange a ride.

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Rock County Public Health Department serves Rock County residents by improving population health outcomes and removing barriers through community partnerships to provide everyone the opportunity to reach their full health potential. Visit the Rock County Public Health Department website at www.co.rock.wi.us/departments/public-health and follow them on social media @rockcountyphd.

Please send all media inquiries to Media.PublicHealth@co.rock.wi.us.