

New COVID-19 Vaccine for BA.5: When Should You Get the Booster?

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What's happening

New boosters from Pfizer and Moderna that target the newest strains of the omicron variant have arrived.

Why it matters

The older vaccine formulas are still effective at preventing severe disease, but the mutating virus has whittled some of that protection away. The new formulas target BA.5, which is responsible for most current COVID-19 cases.

What's next

Shots are available throughout the country. People age 12 and older are eligible for one.

Updated vaccines that target the newest versions of **COVID-19, BA.4 and BA.5**, are now available -- probably at a site within five miles of you. These new vaccines, which are just one booster of **Pfizer's or Moderna's updated formulas**, were created to be a defense against COVID-19 this fall and winter when many people will be spending time indoors, cozying up and sharing air with others.

While the original vaccines still offer protection against severe disease, **infection protection from the vaccines has waned significantly** from when they first rolled out as the virus continues to mutate. And while the rate of people dying or being hospitalized from COVID-19 is markedly better than earlier points in the pandemic, an **average of more than 400 deaths per day** are still being reported in the US this month.