



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Van Buren/Cass District Health Department is Offering Flu Vaccines.

Protect yourself and others by getting vaccinated.

Lawrence, Mich – The Van Buren/Cass District Health Department is offering flu vaccines at multiple locations across Van Buren and Cass county. In addition to offering flu vaccines at the Health Department locations in Lawrence and Dowagiac, there will also be flu vaccination clinics hosted at various venues. Flu vaccinations are covered by most insurance plans. Please bring your insurance card with you to your appointment.

Getting vaccinated against the flu reduces the spread of illness, which is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. This reduces the chance of severe illness, hospitalization, or death due to a flu infection. Getting vaccinated also protects the people around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, pregnant people, and people with certain chronic health conditions. Good handwashing, covering your cough and staying away from others when sick also prevents the spread of flu and other contagious diseases.

Flu is a contagious illness that can be spread from person to person through droplets when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or talks. Symptoms of the flu include coughing, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, sore throat, headache, fatigue, fever, and/or chills. The flu can affect anyone, but older adults, children, and individuals with chronic health conditions are at greater risk for severe complications from flu.

Visit our website at <https://vbcassdhd.org/medical-services/flu/> to schedule an appointment. Locations of upcoming flu vaccination clinics are as follows;

- ★ **Tuesday**, October 5th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Covert Fire Department (33805 M-140. Covert, MI)
- ★ **Thursday**, October 7th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Southwestern Michigan College (58900 Cherry Grove Rd. Dowagiac, MI)
- ★ **Tuesday**, October 12th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Van Buren Conference Center (490 S. Paw Paw St. Lawrence, MI)
- ★ **Thursday**, October 14th from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM at Marcellus High School, in the Gymnasium. (303 W. Arbor. Marcellus, MI)
- ★ **Tuesday**, October 19th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Antwerp Township Activity Center (24821 Front Ave. Mattawan, MI)
- ★ **Thursday**, October 21st from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Southwestern Michigan College (58900 Cherry Grove Rd. Dowagiac, MI)
- ★ **Tuesday**, October 26th from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Van Buren Conference Center (490 S. Paw Paw St. Lawrence, MI)

COVID-19 vaccines will also be available at flu clinics being offered through the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department. COVID-19 1st & 2nd dose available for ages 12 and older who have not yet completed the series of Pfizer-BioNTech, or ages 18 and older for Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna or Janssen (Johnson & Johnson).

Third doses of mRNA vaccines will be available for individuals that are moderately or severely immunocompromised. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) **RECOMMENDS** that people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems receive a **3rd dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna** at least 28 days after receiving their 2nd dose of the same vaccine. This includes people who have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatments for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advance or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that suppress your immune response

People should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them.

At this time Pfizer-BioNTech is the **ONLY** vaccine approved for booster doses. Booster doses of Pfizer-BioNTech will be available for individuals in the categories listed below. This booster dose **MUST** be at least 6 months from their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.

Pfizer-BioNTech BOOSTER Dose is available for the following groups*:

- **Ages 65 and older SHOULD receive a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.**
- **Residents in long term care settings SHOULD receive a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.**
- **Ages 18-64 who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of their occupational or residential setting MAY receive a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.**
 - First Responders (healthcare workers, firefighters, police, & congregate care staff)
 - Educational staff (teachers, support staff, daycare workers)
 - Food and agriculture workers
 - Corrections workers
 - U.S. Postal Service workers
 - Public transit workers
 - Grocery store workers
- **Ages 50-64 with underlying medical conditions SHOULD receive a booster dose of Pfizer-Bio-NTech vaccine.**
- **Ages 18-49 with underlying medical conditions MAY receive a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine**

The CDC lists the following conditions as those eligible for a **BOOSTER** dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung disease (COPD, Asthma, interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension)
- Dementia or other neurological conditions
- Diabetes
- Down Syndrome
- Heart Conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension)
- HIV infection
- Liver Disease
- Obesity

- Pregnancy
- Smoking (current or former)
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
- Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant patients
- Stroke or cerebrovascular disease
- Substance use disorders

Visit the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website for additional information.

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html

For more information on flu vaccinations and to make an appointment, call (269)621-3143, or visit the health department website at <https://vbcassdhd.org/medical-services/flu/>.

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