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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release
September 27, 2021

Pfizer booster shot available for those 65+, others with increased risk and certain occupations

On September 22, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended the emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to provide for a single booster dose, to be administered at least six months after completion of the primary series. The CDC's Advisory Committee voted on September 23 to recommend the booster dose for:

- Individuals 65 years of age and older and long-term care facility residents;
- Individuals 50-64 with underlying medical conditions. A list of medical conditions that increase risk for severe disease is broad and can be found [here](#);
- Individuals 18-49 with underlying medical conditions may receive a booster dose based on individual benefit and risk; and
- the CDC also recommends that individuals aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and infection because of occupational or residential setting may receive a booster of Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their primary series, based on individual benefit and risk. Occupational and residential settings that increase risk for exposure are very broad and involve anyone who may, through their work or residence, spend increased time where physical distancing is difficult and includes health care workers, teachers, and frontline essential workers.

The authorization applies only to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Individuals who received a Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccination are not eligible for the booster shot at this time. The CDC has stated that they will address recommendations for these vaccines as soon as data is available.

"The FDA and CDC went through a rigorous process of data review involving doctors, scientists and leading vaccine experts before making this decision," said Dr. Josh Meyerson, Medical Director with the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. "Consideration was given to real-world data on the Pfizer vaccine's efficacy over a sustained period of time provided by both U.S. and international sources," he said, adding that the vaccine has been proven to be safe and effective – both the initial two-dose administration and now the booster shot.

These recommendations are separate from the recommendations for an additional dose in persons who are immunosuppressed due to underlying medical conditions or immune-suppressing medications. For immunocompromised individuals an additional dose of an mRNA vaccine should be given anytime 28 days after completion of their primary series.

For qualifying residents and others within the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department's two-county jurisdiction of Benzie and Leelanau counties, to sign up for the Pfizer booster shot:

1. Register for any clinic offering the Pfizer vaccine. A list of clinic dates, times, and locations is available on the [health department website](#).
2. Call the Michigan COVID-19 hotline at 888-535-6136 for assistance in scheduling an appointment.

"Individuals with questions about whether they qualify or if they would benefit from a booster shot, or other questions about the vaccine for themselves or family members, should talk to their primary care provider," said Dr. Meyerson.

The health department is offering free COVID-19 testing with the support of HONU lab. The test is free, and no doctor's order is required. Pre-registration is not required, but it is recommended to reduce time spent at the testing clinic, and walk-ins are welcome. Testing is available:

- Tuesday, September 28th, from 10 am – 3 pm at the Crystal Café in Benzonia. To register visit: <https://honumg.info/CrystalCafe>
- Thursday, September 30th, from 10 - 3 pm at the Suttons Bay Old Middle School. To register visit: <http://honumg.info/OldSuttonsBayMS>
- Friday, October 1st, from 10 am – 3 pm at the Crystal Café in Benzonia. To register visit: <https://honumg.info/CrystalCafe>

Vaccination is our most powerful tool. Everyone is welcome at all health department clinics, including residents and non-residents. All three COVID-19 vaccines are available at every clinic. Minors must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian. Public health nurses are on-site at these events and able to answer any questions about the vaccines.

Appointments are required and can be scheduled by clicking on the clinic link below:

Tuesday, September 28th

- Suttons Bay Middle School Gymnasium, 310 S. Elm Street, Suttons Bay, MI 49682
- Time: 2:00-6:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Wednesday, September 29th

- Crystal Cafe, 1681 Benzie Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 2:00- 6:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

COVID-19 Case Counts

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting the following case information:

- Friday, September 24, 14 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (7), and Leelanau (7).
- Saturday, September 25, 8 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (4), and Leelanau (4).
- Sunday, September 26, 2 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (1), and Leelanau (1).
- Today, September 27, 6 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (4) and Leelanau (2).

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,444, Leelanau– 1,500
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 112, Leelanau– 120
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,298, Leelanau– 1,362
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 34, Leelanau– 18
- Hospitalized: 186 total; 5 currently

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