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March 5, 2021

Vaccination Eligibility Expands Monday to People Age 55+ with High-Risk Conditions

Starting Monday, March 8, Vermonters ages 55+ with certain high-risk health conditions are eligible for FREE COVID-19 vaccines. On March 15, that will be expanded to include 16+ with certain high-risk health conditions.

High-risk health conditions include:

- Current cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- Heart disease
- Immunocompromised / Weakened immune system
- Severe obesity (BMI of 40 or more)
- Pregnancy
- Diabetes (Types 1 & 2)
- Disabilities, including chromosomal disorders, intellectual disabilities, and disabilities that affect lung function
- Sickle cell disease

For a detailed list of eligible conditions and to sign-up for your vaccine starting Monday, visit HealthVermont.gov/MyVaccine. If registering online is not an option, you can make an appointment by calling (855) 722-7878.

You do NOT need a doctor's note or proof of a health condition to sign up. The Health Department may use the information you provide to confirm your eligibility, either through medical records or by contacting your provider. The department may also reach out to people who don't have a provider to offer a connection to care.

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Vaccination Information for Education and Child Care Systems

The K-12 education community and regulated childcare program staff will receive information on how and when they will be vaccinated, and instructions on how to register, directly from their employers.

Please do not try to make an appointment until you hear from your employer.

Appointments will occur over the next few weeks. If you have questions, please contact your school's COVID-19 coordinator.

Eligible for vaccination? More appointments are available

The state is partnering with the Vermont National Guard to administer vaccines at the Doubletree Hotel in South Burlington on March 6 and 7. As many as 400 first doses will be administered per day. Next week, the Guard efforts will expand to the Barre and Springfield areas.

We also plan to activate an even larger contingent of the National Guard on March 15 to provide more vaccination opportunities as the supply increases later this month.

In addition, Walmart will start vaccinations this week at its six stores in Vermont. People will register for appointments at these new sites through the Health Department website and call center.

If you have already made an appointment at another clinic but would like to get vaccinated sooner, you can still register for these sites – but please **CANCEL** your original appointment in the system where you made it. Cancellations and unplanned no-shows could result in spoiled vaccine doses.

If you need to cancel your appointment, please do as soon as possible. If it was made on the Health Department website, you'll need to log in to your account and cancel it there. If you have trouble canceling, call 855-722-7878.

Register with Health Department

New Guidance Expands Gathering Options for Vaccinated People in Vermont

Gov. Phil Scott announced at Friday's press conference that effective today, people who are vaccinated can gather with other vaccinated individuals at their homes.

"For example, if eight fully vaccinated individuals wanted to get together at someone's house for dinner, they're now able to do so," Gov. Scott said. "This can also include one other household that is not vaccinated."

Gov. Scott acknowledged this will likely lead to other questions, and he expects to have further announcements next week.

More COVID-19 testing added in Franklin County and Stowe

Knowing if you carry the virus means you can act to protect yourself, your loved ones and your community from COVID-19. If you got together with anyone outside your household, think you might have been exposed to the virus, or have any symptoms (no matter how mild) — get tested!

The Missisquoi Valley Rescue is holding COVID-19 testing in response to the increase in COVID-19 cases seen across Franklin County. The tests are free and there is no registration.

Tests will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Hours for all locations and days are 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

- Monday, March 8: Franklin – Franklin Fire Station, 5154 Main St.
- Tuesday, March 9: Alburgh – Alburgh Fire Department Bingo Hall, 60 Firehouse Rd., Alburgh

In Stowe, testing will be held this weekend at Stowe High School, 413 Barrows Rd. Register online or walk-in.

- Saturday, March 6, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, March 7, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There are additional testing sites located across Vermont. Testing is free to all, and many sites now let you [take your own sample](#) using a short swab in your nose.

If you're a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you can use [this timeline](#) to help guide when to get tested.

If you have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, please contact your health care provider so they can refer you for testing. If you don't have a provider, you can call 2-1-1.

Find more testing near you

Additional resources about vaccination & more

Find answers to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine from the [CDC](#).

Find information sheets, posters and toolkits, and translated materials on our [Resources web page](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard: healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine-data.

Get Vermont-specific information in our [Frequently Asked Questions](#). New questions added this week include:

- I lost my vaccine card. How do I get a new one?
- I have a high-risk health condition. How do I make an appointment for a vaccine?
- I work at a school. How will I get my vaccine?
- Can I still infect someone with the COVID-19 virus after I've been fully vaccinated?
- I live in a border town. Do I need to quarantine if I travel to and from towns across the border?
- How long does it take for the vaccine to protect me from getting COVID-19?
- How long does protection from the vaccine last?

See all the FAQs

Take care of your emotional and mental health

If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs emotional support, help is available 24/7:

- Call your [local mental health crisis line](#).
- Text VT to 741741 to talk with someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#).
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255. For more info, visit healthvermont.gov/suicide.
- Get connected to Alcohol and Drug Support Services at [VT Helplink](#).
- Get self-help tips and connect to mental health services at [COVID Support VT](#).

Read more on coping with stress

New on healthvermont.gov

It has been almost exactly one year since the first case of COVID-19 was identified in Vermont. Since that time, numerous Health Department staff have been pulled from their regular duties to help respond to the pandemic.

View our latest [Weekly Data Summary Spotlight](#) to learn more about the public health issues that we would normally be highlighting, including:

- Climate & Health
- Non-COVID Infectious Diseases
- Suicide Prevention & Mental Health
- The Opioid Epidemic & Substance Misuse
- Vermonters with Disabilities
- Diabetes & Heart Disease Prevention



As of 8:41am Friday, March 5, 2021:

113,865 Vermonters have received a least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. See the latest vaccine data on the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

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