Vermonters age 50 and older can make a vaccine appointment starting Monday

Beginning at 8:15 a.m. on Monday, March 29, Vermonters age 50 and older will be able to make an appointment for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Going online to healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine is the fastest way to make an appointment, and there are enough slots at sites throughout Vermont for everyone who is eligible.

Click on the "Make an appointment" button to use the Health Department registration system. If you prefer to make your COVID-19 vaccine appointment through a participating pharmacy, you can find links on the same page to Kinney Drugs, CVS and Walgreens.

Anyone who is unable to make their appointment online, or who needs to speak with someone in a language other than English can call 855-722-7878.

Vaccination sites are available around the state, and people can choose a nearby location when making their appointment.

Prepare to make an appointment

Dr. Levine urges caution amid high case counts, upcoming holidays

Health Commissioner Mark Levine said at Friday's press conference that we are meeting our primary public health goal of reducing the number of deaths and severe illness, and protecting those among us who are most vulnerable.

He said, however, that the high number of 251 new cases reported today is concerning, and yet another reminder that we still must do everything we can to keep this virus from spreading.

"This is especially important among younger Vermonters who will be the last age groups eligible for the virus," Dr. Levine said.

He also cautioned Vermonters planning to celebrate upcoming holidays, beginning this weekend with Passover, followed by Easter and Ramadan soon after. "Though people are likely looking forward to spending time with family and friends, please follow the current gathering guidance," Dr. Levine said.

Fully vaccinated people can gather freely, but anyone who is not vaccinated should limit their social interactions to one other unvaccinated household at a time.

"You may want to have 'the COVID talk' ahead of any gathering, to make sure everyone is comfortable with the plans to stay safe," Dr. Levine said.

The CDC is still urging people to avoid non-essential travel right now, but if you do travel and are not vaccinated, be sure to quarantine for 14 days, or seven days with a negative test result and no symptoms.

"As always, remember that testing is available around the state, and this is a key tool for preventing further spread of the virus," Dr. Levine added.

View the current gathering guidance

Vaccine registrations open for Vermonters age 60 and older

On Thursday, more than 11,200 Vermonters age 60 and older made appointments for COVID-19 vaccine through the state registration system, the first day the age group became eligible.

The system experienced some technical problems early on, leading to some people being scheduled for testing appointments instead of vaccine appointments. The issue was resolved by mid-morning and the Health Department has reached out to those impacted.

People affected can also log into their account make sure they have the appointment they want. Vaccine appointments have a "needle" icon on the left side. If needed, you can cancel any incorrect appointments and reschedule. Anyone who needs assistance can also call 855-722-7878.

Don't let COVID-19 set us back as vaccination progresses, Dr. Levine urges

As warmer weather and sunshine arrives and vaccination progresses, it's easy to feel hopeful and energized about life getting closer to normal, Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, said at Tuesday's press conference.

"But though we know changes are coming to life as we have known it in the past year, they're not here yet," said Dr. Levine. "We are still in a really delicate time, where the virus, and its variants, can and will take advantage of us if we let our guard down. It has the potential to set us back in our efforts, hampering us in the race."

We can still keep this virus at bay by wearing our masks, keeping our distance, and avoiding crowds, while we vaccinate as many Vermonters as we can as quickly as we can, Dr. Levine said. Keep gatherings small, try to avoid travel that's not essential, and get tested.

Dr. Levine reminded Vermonters that the best vaccine you can get is the one you can get right now. Vermont has now vaccinated about one third of Vermonters age 16 and over.

"It's OK to ask questions, to learn more about the vaccines that are available, but while this pandemic is still raging, there just isn't time to wait. Get your shot – whichever one it is – when it's available to you," he said.

Learn more about getting the vaccine

Change in guidance for bars and social clubs

Effective Wednesday, March 24: bars and social clubs, like American Legions and VFWs, are being moved under the state's restaurant guidance, which will allow them to reopen within that sector's current restrictions. These include operating at 50% capacity, requiring patrons be seated at tables with a maximum of 6 per table, 6 feet of distance between parties,

masking and more. Municipalities will be able to place more restrictions on these establishments in their jurisdictions.

See Work Safe guidance from the [Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#).

[See Work Safe guidance](#)

If you have any symptoms, stay home and get tested for COVID-19

Interviews with people who have COVID-19 indicate that some assumed they had a cold or a sinus infection, instead of first thinking they might have COVID-19. The COVID-19 virus is still circulating in our communities, and the only way to know if you have it is to get tested.

Remember that [symptoms](#) can sometimes be mild, such as a headache, cough, fatigue or a runny nose. So, if you have even just one of these symptoms, it's best to get tested. It's also important to avoid going to work, school or other places until you receive a negative result. COVID-19 is a highly transmissible virus, and this is how we can each protect our loved ones and our communities.

If you have symptoms, talk to your health care provider. They can refer you for testing.

Testing is also important even if you don't have symptoms, since you can still have COVID-19 and not feel sick. If you don't have symptoms and want to get tested, there are [many test sites](#) now available around the state.

It's free and easy! [Watch a video about what to expect](#).

[Find testing sites](#)

Additional resources about vaccination & more

- Find answers to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine from the CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html.
- Get Vermont-specific information in our Frequently Asked Questions.
- Sign up for the COVID-19 Weekly Email Update.
- Find information sheets, posters and toolkits, as well as translated materials on our Resources web page.

Visit the Resources webpage

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

As of 12:00pm on March 26, 2021:

- 189,454 Vermonters have received a least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- 103,779 Vermonters have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

See the latest vaccine data on the COVID-19 Dashboard.