



UNC Family Medicine Patient Newsletter

May 2022

COVID Vaccinations – Updates on Boosters for Ages 5 & Up

COVID numbers have again shown an uptick in recent weeks in North Carolina, and we want everyone to stay safe as mask and vaccination requirements are becoming less regulated. ***The best way to make sure you and your family are protected is for everyone to get fully vaccinated and boosted!*** There are ***safe, effective vaccines*** available for those ages five and up. Here is the [most recent guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

CDC STRENGTHENS RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY FOR COVID-19 BOOSTER SHOTS

- **CDC has expanded eligibility of COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to everyone 5 years of age and older**, recommending that children ages 5 through 11 years should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series.
- Vaccination with a primary series among this age group has lagged behind other age groups leaving them vulnerable to serious illness.
- CDC has also strengthened its recommendation that **those 12 and older who are immunocompromised and those 50 and older should receive a second booster dose at least 4 months after their first.**
- While older Americans have the highest coverage of any age group of first booster doses, **most older Americans received their last dose many months ago, leaving many who are vulnerable without the protection they may need to prevent severe disease, hospitalization, and death.**

 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator

Along with vaccination, a very helpful resource as we see more cases in our community is the recently launched [COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator](#), where you can find a location (such as local pharmacies) that will do testing and also offer point of care (on-site) treatment. Find your local Test to Treat sites [HERE](#).

We care about you – as COVID numbers are on the rise again, we recommend you wear a mask indoors in public spaces and get tested if you find out you have been around someone who has tested positive for COVID!

Let's Talk Health with Dr. Dana Neutze



Dr. Neutze

Childhood Vaccinations

While we are still waiting approval of COVID vaccines for children under 5, there are many other infectious diseases that can be prevented with vaccines in this age group! We have many longstanding, highly effective vaccines to fight illnesses which has resulted in the dramatic decreases in deaths and disabilities from diseases such as measles, polio, tetanus, whooping cough, and more. We give most vaccines to children under the age of two to protect them against these diseases early in life.



**Questions
about your child's vaccinations?**

UNC
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Family Medicine

Making sure your child up to date with their vaccines is important, especially as more children engage in in-person learning and social engagements.

If you think your child may have missed any of their scheduled vaccinations, please ask your doctor or schedule an appointment by My UNC Chart or call us at 984-974-0210!

We understand that families may still have questions about various vaccines. Some of the common questions and concerns we hear are:

- Why does my child need so many vaccines? The body slowly builds immunity to diseases with vaccines. Some of the vaccines work best by giving repeated doses every couple of months. The [American Association of Pediatrics has carefully designed a vaccine schedule](#) that will protect your child the best. Read their Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule recommendations [here](#).
- Some diseases don't even exist anymore—why do I need to vaccinate my child? It's easy to feel like polio and measles are yesterday's problems. But these diseases are not gone—they are only under control because of vaccinations. Even today, there are measles outbreaks that happen when vaccination levels fall within a community.
- I've heard vaccines cause autism in children. No scientific study or data has been able to support this connection—period. For more information, visit the Autism Science Foundation, [here](#).
- Is there a vaccine that can protect against cancer? Yes! There are actually two. Both the hepatitis B and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines can prevent certain cancers. Even though the risk of cancer doesn't develop until later in life, we recommend getting these vaccines as a child when they can have the most protective effect.

You can check if your child is due for these vaccines on [My UNC Chart](#) (menu-> my record -> preventive care) or you can ask at your child's next visit.

**CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*Keep your child up-to-date on their vaccinations -
keep your child healthy!*

UNC
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Family Medicine

- **Why does my child need so many vaccines?** The body slowly builds immunity to disease with vaccines. Some of the vaccines work best by giving repeated doses every couple of months.
- **Some diseases don't even exist anymore—why do I need to vaccinate my child?** These diseases are not gone—they are only under control because of vaccinations
- **I've heard vaccines cause autism in children?** No scientific study or data has been able to support this connection—period.
- **Is there a vaccine that can protect against cancer?** Yes! There are actually two. Both the hepatitis B and human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccines can prevent certain cancers.

Visit My UNC Chart to see when your child is due for their vaccinations, or ask at their next visit!

Formula Shortage – Frequently Asked Questions

We understand that many parents are experiencing anxiety because of a national shortage of infant formula. Our Maternal Child Health (MCH) team would like to share this tip sheet as a starting point to help reduce some of the anxiety about switching formulas and to make sure we're clear - please do not dilute your baby's formula! Feel free to share widely, and reach out to your provider with any questions!

Current Formula Shortage

Frequently Asked Questions

Is your child 12 months or older?



YES.

You can switch to other milk, like cow's milk.

NO. Your child should continue drinking formula.



Is it ok to switch brands?

YES.

• Consider being flexible and trying other brands if your child does not have an allergy or sensitivity.



• If you are running out of formula, it is OK to make the switch right away; if you have enough to slowly transition, you may prefer to do this. You can mix 25% new and 75% old for a day, then 50% each for a day, and then 75% new and 25% old for a day.



• It may take a few days for your baby to get used to a new formula brand, but in most cases, switching is fine. It may cause some minor gastrointestinal issues (like gas, stool changes or fussiness).



• Consider being flexible and trying other brands if your child does not have an allergy or sensitivity.



Can I stretch out or water down my formula supply?

NO.



• Formula or breastmilk is the major source of nutrition for babies under one year. Even if they are eating solids, it should not be diluted or watered down. This can reduce the amount of nutrients your baby receives and can lead to potentially serious complications.



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Family Medicine

Thanks to Lucy McMillian, RN, BSN, & Matt Zeitler, MD, for the content.

UNC Family Medicine provides prenatal and postpartum care as well as mother/newborn dyad care after the baby arrives. Families from our communities receive high-quality family-centered care from a multidisciplinary team of dedicated attending physicians, certified nurse midwives, resident physicians, a registered nurse, administrative specialists, medical assistants, and community resources. Our Maternal Child Health team believes that sensitive and meaningful communication during pregnancy can

significantly predict prenatal care satisfaction, establish a relationship of trust, and provide an opportunity for building a long-lasting relationship that will support women and families towards happy and healthy outcomes.

Additional resources:

NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) – [Recommendations for Families During Infant Formula Shortage](#)

UNC Health Talk – [Do's and Don'ts for Parents Struggling to Find Formula Amid National Shortages](#)
Healthy Children – [With the baby formula shortage, what should I do if I can't find any?](#)

Reach Out and Read (ROAR)

REACH OUT AND READ (ROAR)



Dr. Michael Baca-Atlas reads to a happy patient

Daily reading serves as a catalyst for healthy childhood development and promotes healthy family relationships and dynamics. We provide books at well child visits that reflect the children and families we serve, with stories that are relevant and engaging, and accurately reflect and affirm a diverse range of identities, cultures, and histories.



UNC Family Medicine is committed to pediatric care, from pregnancy on. One way we support our pediatric patients is through our adoption of the Reach out and Read (ROAR) methodology. The UNC Family Medicine Center at Chapel Hill, Durham, and Carraway are all Reach Out and Read partners, believing that all families should have the tools and information they need to make reading aloud a daily routine. Daily reading serves as a catalyst for healthy childhood development and promotes healthy family relationships and dynamics. We provide books at well-child visits that reflect the children and families we serve, with relevant and engaging stories, and accurately reflect and affirm a diverse range of identities, cultures, and histories. We'd love to see you, your children, and your family and help you not only read but reach your family's fullest potential!

Learn more about Reach Out and Read [here](#).

Child and Maternal Health Focus Groups – Participants Needed!

Do you have a child who gets their primary care through UNC Family Medicine? In collaboration with our Patient Advisory Council, we are conducting focus groups to learn more about what you need from us as

a clinic. We are looking for parents/caregivers of children who get care at UNC Family Medicine to participate in a 90-minute focus group this July. We are excited to be able to offer a 50-dollar gift card for each participant who completes a session. For more information and to submit your interest, please click [here](#).



Want to keep up with the amazing work our faculty and staff are accomplishing? Follow [UNC Family Medicine](#) on social media!



UNC Family Medicine

uncfamilymedicine.org

(984) 974-0210

[click here to unsubscribe](#)

 **UNC**
HEALTH CARE
FAMILY MEDICINE