

COVID-19 added to routine vax schedule: Suggested talking points

- **The CDC is not making COVID-19 vaccines mandatory for school entry.**
 - Adding COVID-19 vaccines to the recommended immunization list does not impact vaccine requirements for school entry.
 - Decisions around school vaccine requirements lie with states, counties, and municipalities.
 - Currently, all 50 states [require vaccines for tetanus, polio, measles, and chickenpox](#) for kindergarten enrollment. But state mandates around other recommended vaccines vary.
 - Only California and Washington, D.C., have announced a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for students, while 21 states have [banned COVID-19 vaccine mandates for students](#).
- **Adding COVID-19 vaccines to the recommended immunization list helps expand access.**
 - Federal COVID-19 funds are running dry, which means COVID-19 vaccines may soon no longer be free for people who are uninsured.
 - The inclusion of COVID-19 vaccines in the recommended immunization schedule guarantees that kids without health insurance can continue to get the shots for free.
 - [Schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment for you and your child](#). Kids ages 6 months and older can get the COVID-19 vaccine primary series, and kids ages 5 years and older can now get an Omicron booster.
- **Access to adult vaccines is also expanding for people on Medicare.**
 - Signed in August, the Inflation Reduction Act makes improvements to Medicare that include saving money on vaccines.
 - All recommended adult vaccines [will be free \(with no deductible and no cost-sharing\)](#) to people with Medicare prescription drug coverage starting in 2023.
 - Free vaccines will include the ones for shingles and tetanus as well as for COVID-19 once federal funds run dry.

COVID-19 added to routine vax schedule: Frequently asked questions

1. Why are COVID-19 vaccines being added to the recommended immunization schedules?

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) did not add COVID-19 vaccines to recommended immunization lists to make them mandatory for school entry. The CDC does not have the power to set vaccine requirements for school entry—that power lies at the state and local levels. Instead, the addition of COVID-19 vaccines to recommended immunization lists helps ensure that kids without health insurance can still receive the shots for free after federal funds for the vaccines run out. The Vaccines for Children Program is a federally funded program that provides [ACIP-recommended vaccines](#) at no cost to children who might not otherwise be vaccinated because of inability to pay.

2. Which adult vaccines will be free as a result of the Inflation Reduction Act?

[ACIP-recommended adult vaccines](#) (including the shingles, tetanus, and now COVID-19 vaccines) will be free to people with Medicare prescription drug coverage starting in 2023 as a result of the [Inflation Reduction Act](#).

3. Why are routine immunizations important?

Just because a disease is no longer circulating in the U.S. does not mean that it cannot return. As we've seen with [polio's recent reemergence in New York](#), infectious diseases that have been absent from a community for years or even decades can pop up again. Staying up to date with routine immunizations ensures that we remain protected against many serious diseases, including those that have been eliminated.