

News Release

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Yavapai County and ADHS Confirm First Case of Omicron Variant in Arizona

Public health's recommendation remains vaccination, boosters and mitigation

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and Yavapai County Community Health Services (YCCCHS) have confirmed Arizona's first known case of the COVID-19 Omicron variant.

"Much remains unknown about the Omicron variant at this time, including whether it is more transmissible and more capable of producing severe illness than the Delta variant," said Don Herrington, ADHS interim director. "We do know that current COVID-19 vaccines have remained very effective against Delta and other variants, and I strongly encourage Arizonans to get vaccinated if they aren't already and make sure they're current on their booster dose if they are fully vaccinated."

Leslie Horton, director of Yavapai County Community Health Services, echoed these sentiments.

"It's natural to be concerned, but we should avoid overreacting to this news," Horton said. "Since late 2020, as different variants have come along, COVID-19 vaccines have consistently proven highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Our best response to the Omicron variant, as with any other variant of concern, is renewing our focus on vaccination and following recommendations, such as staying home when sick, that are proven to reduce the spread."

Arizona has hundreds of providers offering safe, free, and highly effective COVID-19 primary vaccines to everyone age 5 and older. Booster doses are recommended for everyone 18 and older at least six months after completing a primary series of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or at least two months after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine.

Arizonans also can protect themselves and their families while preserving hospital capacity by:

- Getting a flu shot: [azhealth.gov/Flu](https://www.azhealth.gov/Flu)
- Masking up, maintaining physical distance, keeping hands washed, staying home if sick, and following other prevention steps: [azhealth.gov/COVID-19](https://www.azhealth.gov/COVID-19)
- Getting tested if you have symptoms or five to seven days after being exposed to someone who has or who you believe may have COVID-19: [azhealth.gov/Testing](https://www.azhealth.gov/Testing)
- If you or a loved one contracts COVID-19, looking into monoclonal antibody treatments that can reduce the severity of illness and reduce the chances of hospitalization: [azhealth.gov/mAbs](https://www.azhealth.gov/mAbs)

To find a vaccination provider, please visit [azhealth.gov/FindVaccine](https://www.azhealth.gov/FindVaccine) or call the bilingual Arizona COVID-19 Hotline at 844.542.8201 (press 8 to be connected to a navigator) between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. seven days a week.

More information on COVID-19 vaccines is available at [azhealth.gov/COVID19Vaccines](https://www.azhealth.gov/COVID19Vaccines). More information on COVID-19 and ways to curb the spread is available at [azhealth.gov/COVID-19](https://www.azhealth.gov/COVID-19) and www.yavapaiaz.us/chs.