



Media Information:

For immediate release:

August 23, 2021

Get your fully FDA approved COVID-19 vaccination today

Billings, MT – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Monday gave full, regular approval to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine that millions of Americans have already received under Emergency Use Authorization. This approval coincides with a steep increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Yellowstone County.

This rigorously documented regular FDA license covers vaccination with two doses of Pfizer vaccine for people age 16 and older. The vaccine remains available to everyone age 12 to 15 under the Emergency Use Authorization.

“Many unvaccinated Yellowstone County residents have said they are waiting for the COVID-19 vaccine to receive full, regular FDA approval, so they need wait no longer,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County health officer and RiverStone Health CEO. “We should expect a large increase in demand as people waiting for approval join those who have decided to do their part to protect our community through vaccination. Vaccination is the safest, most effective way to curtail the current outbreak in Yellowstone County as well as to keep our schools and businesses open.”

Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is widely available. Call your pharmacy or primary care provider to make an appointment for your first shot or find a list of local vaccine providers’ phone numbers at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).

So far, 66,093 Yellowstone County residents are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, but that is only 48% of all residents age 12 and older. Including children under age 12 who are not eligible for vaccination yet, about 40% of our total county population has been vaccinated.

Three Yellowstone County residents die

In the past two days, three Yellowstone County residents have died of COVID-19 related illness at Billings hospitals.

- A man in his 70s passed away on Monday, Aug. 23. He was fully vaccinated, resided in a senior care facility and had underlying health conditions.

- A woman in her 60s passed away on Sunday, Aug. 22. She wasn't vaccinated and had underlying health conditions.
- A woman in her 70s passed away on Sunday, Aug. 22. She was not vaccinated and had underlying conditions.

Billings hospitals fill

The current COVID-19 surge in Yellowstone County has filled Billings Clinic and St. Vincent Healthcare with more pandemic patients than they have seen since December 2020. . On Monday, the Billings hospitals together had 81 COVID-19 patients hospitalized, including 19 in ICU and 12 on ventilators. One week earlier, the total number of COVID-19 hospital inpatients was 58.

Walk-in vaccination clinics

RiverStone Health is offering first and second doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to everyone age 12 and older. Third-doses are available now only to immune-compromised people. RiverStone Health has scheduled these free, walk-in clinics:

- **Thursday, Aug. 26, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.**, Healthy By Design Gardeners' Market, South Park. Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines will be offered.
- **Aug. 30, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**, Rocky Mountain College, in the Bair Family Student Center, with Pfizer and J&J.
- **Sept. 2, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**, RiverStone Health, 123 S. 27th, in the Lil Anderson Center (four-story building).
- **Sept. 23, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**, RiverStone Health, in the four-story building.

Individuals may also make appointments for COVID-19 vaccination with the RiverStone Health Immunization Clinic. Call **247-3382**. Due to staffing availability, third doses for immune-compromised people are given *only* at the walk-in clinics, not by appointment. Immune-compromised people may also contact their primary care provider about getting a third COVID-19 vaccination.

More vaccination information is posted at covid.riverstonehealth.org.

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