



## Media Information:

**For immediate release:**  
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### **COVID-19 illness claims 475 Yellowstone County lives**

**Billings, MT** – Two more Yellowstone County residents have died of COVID-19 related illness. The latest person to succumb to the virus is a woman in her 70s who died on Wednesday at a Billings hospital. She was not vaccinated and had underlying medical conditions that put her at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

The Yellowstone County Clerk and Record's office, through a review of death certificates, identified a female resident in her 100s who died on December 16 at her residence. She was fully vaccinated but had underlying medical conditions.

Including the deaths reported today, 475 Yellowstone County residents have lost their lives to the pandemic virus since the first death was reported in April 2020.

On Thursday, Billings hospitals had 33 COVID-19 inpatients, all of whom are not vaccinated. Among the hospitalized COVID-19 patients, 14 were in ICU and 13 were on ventilators.

The Food and Drug Administration recently authorized, under emergency use, a new pill to treat COVID-19. The new pill, Paxlovid, is available by prescription only and should be taken as soon as possible after diagnosis of COVID-19 and within five days of symptom onset. However, prevention through vaccination remains the safest, most effective way to reduce risk of COVID-19 illness, hospitalization and death.

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be readily available at local medical clinics and pharmacies. RiverStone Health provides approved doses of the Pfizer, Moderna or J&J vaccines at free, walk-in clinics. The next COVID-19 vaccination clinic for people age five and older is:

- Thursday, Dec. 30, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at RiverStone Health, 123 S. 27th St., in the four-story building.

First, second and booster doses as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are available at the vaccination clinic. People who previously had one or two doses should bring their vaccination card. Parents must sign consent forms for children under 18.

Masks are required at the vaccination clinics.

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