



## Media Information:

**For immediate release:**

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### **COVID-19 claims another Yellowstone County life**

**Billings, MT** – A Yellowstone County man who died Tuesday became the 520<sup>th</sup> county resident lost to COVID-19 illness since the pandemic began in spring 2020.

The deceased was in his 60s and died in a Billings hospital. He had been vaccinated, but had not received a booster dose. He had underlying medical conditions that put him at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

On Wednesday, Billings hospitals had 57 COVID-19 inpatients, including 27 who weren't vaccinated, 22 who were "fully vaccinated" and eight more who were "up to date" on COVID-19 vaccines.

As currently defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "fully vaccinated" means a person has received the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines: one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or two doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

The CDC says "up to date" means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible. The CDC recommends a booster dose of vaccine for people age 12 and older at least five months after they have received the two-dose series or two months after the one-dose series. Recent research shows that the effectiveness of one dose or two doses of COVID-19 vaccine wanes over time.

To help inform community members of the effectiveness of booster doses, Billings hospitals have started to track the vaccination status of inpatients as either unvaccinated, fully vaccinated or up to date fully vaccinated. Previously, they did not differentiate between "fully vaccinated" and "up to date".

Among the hospitalized COVID-19 patients Wednesday, 12 were in ICU and nine were on ventilators.

State and national data indicate that vaccination, including booster shots, remains the safest, most effective way to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection, sickness and death.

All CDC recommended doses of COVID-19, including booster doses, are available at no charge to people age 5 and older at local clinics and pharmacies. For an appointment, call:

- RiverStone Health Immunization Clinic at 406.247.3382.
- RiverStone Health Clinic at 406.247.3350.

The next RiverStone Health free, walk-in community clinic at the Shrine Auditorium, 1125 Broadwater Ave., will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 3.

For more information on reducing your COVID-19 risk, please visit [covid.riverstonehealth.org](https://covid.riverstonehealth.org).

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