



May 10, 2022

DCHD remains strongly committed to vaccination efforts as COVID cases rise in the state and across the country. Douglas County recently went from low to medium transmission status with Omicron subvariants BA.2 and now BA.212.1 (not-so-affectionately known as “Son of BA.2”) continuing to spread. We are one of 14 Illinois counties now in this higher category. Champaign, McLean, Logan and Sangamon join Douglas in the central part of the state, with the remainder in the Chicagoland area.

What does this category change mean in practical terms? CDC recommendations--in addition to staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines and getting tested if symptomatic--include those at high risk for severe illness talking to their healthcare provider about whether to wear a mask and take other precautions. Consideration of implementing enhanced prevention measures in high-risk congregate settings is also suggested.

The good news remains that being fully vaccinated greatly reduces the chance of hospitalization or death should you contract COVID. The next vaccine clinic at DCHD will be this Thursday, May 12, and appointments can be made by logging onto www.dchealthdept.org. Please note the FDA recommends mRNA vaccines Moderna and Pfizer over the Janssen (J&J) vaccine in most situations, due to a very rare but reported blood clot condition risk.

In other vaccine news, on April 28 Moderna formally submitted a request to the FDA to authorize two small-dose shots for children age 6 months to 6 years, and a similar request from Pfizer is anticipated soon.

Where does Douglas County stand in vaccination numbers? Recent IDPH figures show 51.76% have at least one dose, 48.26% are fully vaccinated (primary series completed), and 4,620 boosters have been administered.

I'd like to let you know about a recent outreach event in which DCHD participated. A substance abuse prevention/education outreach effort called “Hidden In Plain Sight” was held on the Arcola Schools grounds during the JHOC track meet May 2. Also in attendance were several agencies and organizations tied to substance abuse prevention, including two Douglas County residents who have lost children to overdose and independently established outreach efforts to help prevent other families from having to suffer a similar loss. DCHD had 37 interactions, including nine Narcan trainings (a substance that can be used to help reverse overdose effects) and distribution of 22 Narcan kits. It was a fun and really rewarding afternoon.

I am also attaching a letter and flyer about a free orthopedic clinic for children taking place June 8 in Urbana. This effort is sponsored by the Illinois Elks Children’s Care Program, and any help you might be willing to give to let people know about this would be greatly appreciated.

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Douglas County Health Department

In the meantime, have a great week and please let us know how Douglas County Health Department can be of service to you and your communities!

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