



July 29, 2021

To all COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized a second [extension of the shelf life for the Johnson & Johnson \(Janssen\) COVID-19 vaccine by 45 days from 4½ months to six months.](#)

This decision is based on data from ongoing stability assessment studies show that the vaccine remains safe and effective for administration at least six months when refrigerated at temperatures of 36 to 46 degrees Fahrenheit (2 to 8 degrees Celsius), according to Johnson & Johnson.

COVID-19 vaccines with an emergency use authorization do not have fixed expiration dates, and the dates can be extended as more stability data is received and analyzed, according to the FDA. In June, the FDA first extended the vaccine's shelf life by six weeks from three months (90 days) to 4½ months (135 days). Upon further study, the FDA granted a second extension Wednesday.

The FDA's announcement gives providers six more weeks to administer doses that were originally set to expire in August. For example, any doses in unopened, unpunctured vials that were set to expire on Aug. 7 will be viable until Sept. 21, 2021, provided they have been consistently refrigerated at appropriate temperatures.

The shelf-life extension is applicable to vials that expired prior to this announcement, as long as the vials were unopened and unpunctured, and those vials were stored as recommended, according to a [letter the FDA sent to Johnson & Johnson](#) on Wednesday. Vaccine providers should confirm the new expiration date before administration. Johnson & Johnson officials said in a news release the company is in the process of updating those expiration dates, available through its website search.

ACTIONS FOR COVID-19 VACCINE PROVIDERS

- **How to determine new expiration date:** The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine vials and cartons do not contain a printed expiration date. The FDA advises vaccine providers to check the manufacturer's website to obtain the most up-to-date expiration dates for COVID-19 vaccines in storage. Vaccine providers will be able to enter the vaccine lot number into the [Johnson & Johnson Expiry Checker](#) website at www.vaxcheck.jnj or by phone using an automated response system at 1-800-565-4008. This process should take less than one minute to complete. Please visit the Janssen website for providers for step-by-step instructions, including a video, on [how to obtain the expiration date](#) by website using a mobile or desktop device or by phone.
 - With every new lot, obtain the expiration date prior to the first patient administration.
 - Continue to follow a "first-in-first-out" approach to use the oldest vaccine doses first.
 - Prior to discarding any doses, please confirm the expiration date.
 - Expired vaccine should be removed immediately from storage units that contain viable vaccine to avoid inadvertently administering those doses.
 - Discard/return unused doses according to state and federal regulations.

- For more information about disposing of infectious waste, visit the [Ohio EPA website](#).
- ODH guidance: [How to maximize vaccinations, minimize wasted doses](#).

JOHNSON & JOHNSON VACCINE ORDERING

- The Ohio Department of Health has reactivated Johnson & Johnson vaccine ordering through the ImpactSIIS Vaccine Ordering Management System (VOMS). All orders will be filled with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine supply housed at the ODH Receipt, Store, and Stage (RSS) warehouse.
- Providers can request surplus Johnson & Johnson doses from other Ohio providers. Providers across the state have reported an excess of Johnson & Johnson doses, and many of those providers are willing to transfer doses to other providers. If you would like to receive some of these extra doses, ODH can help facilitate transfers.
 - Please contact the ODH COVID-19 Provider Call Center at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829) or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.
 - If you are submitting your request by email, please include “Johnson & Johnson vaccine request” in the subject line and include the number of requested doses in the email, along with your location name and address and point of contact.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE VACCINATION OPPORTUNITIES

COVID-19 vaccine providers should employ all possible tactics to use as many doses as possible. As a reminder, below are strategies to help increase vaccination opportunities:

- As COVID-19 case rates climb and the highly contagious Delta variant becomes an increased threat, vaccination is the best prevention strategy. Providers should continue public outreach efforts to convey the importance of vaccination to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19.
- Identify partnership opportunities with employers, libraries, and community and faith-based organizations for special vaccination clinics at those locations.
- Identify mobile vaccination opportunities through partnerships at community events, including festivals, fairs, food truck events, and farmers markets, for example, or at popular entertainment destinations such as zoos or ballparks. ODH offers mobile vaccination units to support these efforts. [Request a unit](#) through the COVID-19 Vaccine Providers website.
- Partner with local aging agencies, home-delivered meal providers, developmental disabilities boards or Medicaid waiver programs to identify and offer vaccinations for homebound individuals and their caregivers and families.
- Continuation of the first-in-the nation nursing home and assisted living maintenance program to vaccinate new residents and staff, or existing residents and staff who have recently chosen to be vaccinated, on a regular cadence.
- Offer vaccination opportunities for shelters or local jails and other correctional/detention facilities.
- Hospital providers can offer the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine as an option to patients upon inpatient or emergency room discharge.

Thank you for your continued partnership as a COVID-19 vaccine provider.

If you have any additional questions, please call the ODH Provider Call Center between 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829) or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,
COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Relations Team

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