FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Free COVID-19 Vaccinations Available at Monroe County Health Department

The Monroe County Health Department will be offering appointments for free COVID-19 vaccinations at the office location, 315 W. Oak St., Sparta, on the following dates and times:

- Fridays in April from 8:30am-4:00pm (Closed April 15th)

Vaccinations are one important tool that can help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at reducing the severity of illness and risk of hospitalization and death caused by COVID-19.

The latest research suggests that a second booster dose could help increase protection for those who are higher risk for severe outcomes from COVID-19 infection.

Current available vaccines include:

- Pfizer – requires 2-doses, 3 weeks apart. Available to those age 12+.
  - Booster dose available to those age 12+ who have completed the original series at least 5 months prior.
  - Second Booster dose available to those who are:
    - Received first booster dose at least 4 months prior
    - 50 years or older
    - 18 years or older and received both a first dose and booster dose of Johnson & Johnson
    - 12 years or older and moderately to severely immunocompromised (for example, due to cancer treatment, HIV infection, organ transplant, or a medical condition like DiGeorge syndrome).
- Pfizer 5-11Y– requires 2-doses, 3 weeks apart. Available to those ages 5-11 years.
- Moderna—requires 2-doses, 4 weeks apart. Available to those age 18+.
  - Booster dose available to those age 18+ who have completed the original series at least 5 months prior.
  - Second Booster dose available to those who are:
    - Received first booster dose at least 4 months prior
    - 50 years or older
    - 18 years or older and received both a first dose and booster dose of Johnson & Johnson
    - 12 years or older and moderately to severely immunocompromised (for example, due to cancer treatment, HIV infection, organ transplant, or a medical condition like DiGeorge syndrome).

All COVID-19 vaccinations are provided for free. No insurance required.

Pre-registration is preferred. To book an appointment, visit https://vaccinate.wi.gov or call the Monroe County Health Department at 608-269-8666 during business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00a.m.-4:30p.m.

For individuals who test positive for COVID-19, oral antiviral pills can help prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death. At this time, the FDA has authorized two oral antiviral medications, Paxlovid and Legevrio (molnupiravir), that reduce the chances of severe COVID-19 illness, hospitalization, and death for people with mild to moderate COVID-19.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is partnering with the federal government on a new Test to Treat program, as part of the National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Through this program, people will have access to "one-stop" test and treatment locations. Select pharmacies, federally qualified health centers, and long-term care facilities will provide rapid COVID-19 testing. If the test is positive and the person is qualified for antiviral pills, a healthcare provider will offer the medication on the spot. The current list of Test to Treat locations can be found at https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/

Layered mitigation strategies remain the best practice to protect yourself and others against severe illness, hospitalization, or death caused by COVID-19. Simple steps to take to protect yourself and your loved ones include:

- Get vaccinated, if you are able. Stay up to date with your vaccination by receiving a booster dose, if eligible
- Wear a well-fitting mask when in public indoor spaces and at crowded outdoor gatherings
- Maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others
- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay home if you feel sick
- Get tested if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.

For additional information about locations in Monroe County to get vaccinated, visit http://healthymonroecowi.org/covid-19. For the most current information on vaccines, please visit the Wisconsin Department of Health website https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine.htm or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/.

Follow the Monroe County Health Department Facebook page for more.

Healthy People, Healthy Monroe County