

## COVID-19: Press Release 08/03/2021

### Vaccinations at No Cost, No Appointment, No ID Required for

#### COVID-19 Vaccine at County Health Departments in North Georgia

NORTH GA – For the many eligible North Georgians who have not yet been vaccinated against COVID-19, local public health officials urge you more fervently than ever to do so immediately.

COVID-19 cases in the North Georgia Health District were on the decline but have now increased significantly. Our counties, which include Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens and Whitfield, are experiencing moderate to substantial spread as emerging variants, especially the Delta variant, are proving to be more contagious and, in some cases, more serious than previous variants.

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recently announced that the CDC estimates the Delta variant accounts for 78% of new COVID cases in Georgia as it spreads “more than twice as easily” from person to person, and the highest increases in cases, hospitalizations and deaths are among the unvaccinated.

Your local county health department in the North Georgia Health District offers COVID-19 vaccine to Georgians 12 years of age and older, with Pfizer being the only COVID vaccine authorized for children ages 12 to 17. If receiving Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, you will need to return for a second dose to be fully protected. Full protection is reached in an individual two weeks after the final dose. There is no cost for the vaccine. No appointment is needed at county health departments within the health district and no identification is required. Go to <http://www.nghd.org> to find your county health department in North Georgia. Contacts for other COVID-19 vaccine providers in the area are available at [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov).

According to the CDC, the 162+ million Americans who are fully vaccinated have a very strong degree of protection against the variants, including Delta. They are overwhelmingly avoiding severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Unvaccinated individuals account for virtually all the hospitalizations and deaths in the U.S.

Despite seeing case numbers similar to the surge experienced last summer in the U.S., deaths are down more than 70% thanks to vaccination.

This is further proof that getting fully vaccinated is the best thing you can do to protect yourself and those around you, including our children under 12 years old and other vulnerable people in our population who cannot be vaccinated.

You are also urged to help slow the spread of COVID-19 by getting tested if you think you have been exposed to the virus or have symptoms. Free drive-thru testing is available within the North Georgia Health District through MAKO Medical Services in Cherokee and Whitfield counties. Registration is easily available online at [mako.exchange/splash/GAMakotesting](http://mako.exchange/splash/GAMakotesting). This helps us trace who else may have been exposed to the virus and get ahead of it to keep it from spreading further in the community.

Additionally, in areas with substantial and high transmission ([dph.georgia.gov/county-indicator-reports](http://dph.georgia.gov/county-indicator-reports)), the CDC recommends that everyone (including fully vaccinated individuals) wear a mask in public indoor settings to help prevent spread of COVID-19 and the Delta variant.

Together, we can stop Delta and other variants from slowing our progress in the fight against COVID-19. Get vaccinated and do your part to put COVID-19 in the past. Go to your county health department in Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens or Whitfield County, or contact another provider, to get your COVID-19 vaccine right away. Get tested if you have been exposed. Wear a mask in public indoor places where it is needed.

For updates on COVID-19, go to our website and follow us on Facebook @NGaHealth, Twitter @NGAHealthDist, and Instagram @northgahealth.