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**MAYOR ADAMS, COMMISSIONER VASAN ISSUE HEALTH GUIDANCE AHEAD
OF HOLIDAYS, ANNOUNCE ADDITIONAL TOOLS TO KEEP NEW YORKERS
SAFE FROM TRIDEMIC**

*With Increasing COVID-19, Flu, and RSV Cases, Officials Remind New Yorkers to Get
Vaccinated, Mask Up, Test, and Get Treated if Sick*

50 Test to Treat Units Now Offering Flu, RSV Testing, Tamiflu Prescriptions

*Kids Six Months Through Four Years Old Can Now Receive Updated COVID-19 Pfizer Vaccine
at All NYC H+H Hospitals*

NEW YORK – With cases of COVID-19, flu, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) rising, New York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan today reminded New Yorkers to stay safe heading into the holidays by staying up to date with vaccinations, masking in indoor public settings when possible, testing regularly, and staying home if sick. The city also announced that flu and RSV testing, as well as Tamiflu prescriptions, are now available at 50 NYC Health + Hospitals' Test to Treat units. Finally, beginning this week, updated COVID-19 Pfizer vaccines will be available to children from six months to four years old at all of the city's 11 public hospitals. Data shows that this year, flu cases in New York City are already higher than they were during the peak of the last four flu seasons. Additionally, over the past month, the seven-day average of confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 increased, as did cases of RSV.

“When COVID-19 hit New York City almost three years ago, New Yorkers looked out for each other and followed the advice of our health experts,” said **Mayor Adams**. “With the holiday season in full swing and cases of COVID-19, flu, and RSV rising, we are asking New Yorkers to protect themselves and their loved ones once again. Mask up, get tested, get treated if you’re eligible, and, if you haven’t gotten your flu shot or your COVID-19 booster, we encourage you to roll up your sleeve. We are stepping up our efforts to get the tools to stay safe into as many New Yorkers’ hands as possible, and, together, we will have a happy and healthy holiday season.”

“As we enter our third holiday season with COVID-19, we need to keep taking the precautions that keep us and our loved ones healthy,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom**. “I encourage all eligible New Yorkers to keep up with their vaccinations, to utilize free testing resources available citywide, to wear masks as advised, to stay home if sick, and to maintain good hand hygiene. The holiday season is a wonderful time of year to gather with friends and family, and we want to embrace our loved ones this year knowing we have taken all the steps possible to keep us all safe and healthy.”

“We want everyone to have a happy and healthy holiday,” said **DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. “While we’re asking New Yorkers to do their part by masking, staying home if sick, testing, and getting treated, the city stands ready to help all of us through this winter. The Health Department will be closely tracking transmission, variants, and health system capacity, and is making resources easily available, so you know where to turn to protect yourself and each other.”

“The last few years have been really tough, and the city has your back with the resources and guidance to safely enjoy the company of your loved ones this year,” said **Dr. Ted Long, executive director, NYC Test & Treat Corps**. “We have 75 first-in-the-country mobile Test to Treat units and, overall, more than 330 sites where you can get tested or take away free home tests. Get tested before you gather so that you have a healthy and happy holiday — you deserve it!”

“We are very pleased to make available to our youngest patients the updated, bivalent COVID-19 vaccine,” said **Andrew B. Wallach, ambulatory care chief medical officer, NYC Health + Hospitals, MD, FACP**. “These updated, bivalent vaccines offer the best protection against the current variants of the COVID-19 virus circulating in our communities. Further, they are safe and effective and prevent hospitalization and death from COVID-19.”

New York City Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan recently issued a [issued a Health Advisory](#) that urges New York City residents to use high-quality masks when indoors and in crowded outdoor settings. This is especially important for people who are — or are meeting — those who are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19, RSV, or the flu, such as those age 65 and older and people who are immunocompromised.

In addition to wearing masks and getting vaccinated, officials urged New Yorkers to take other precautions, including getting tested before gatherings and if symptoms of illness present. To ensure resources are available throughout the city, New York City officials are providing:

- At-home rapid antigen tests for COVID-19 available at over 250 walk-up distribution locations in every borough, including at city libraries, parks facilities, and cultural institutions, among other locations. New Yorkers can visit [NYC.gov/COVIDTest](https://nyc.gov/COVIDTest) to find the at-home test distribution location most convenient to them. At-home tests are available for public school students and staff who have symptoms and are also being distributed ahead of the winter break.
- COVID-19 testing with immediate access to Paxlovid anti-viral medication for eligible patients at 75 mobile Test to Treat units. Fifty mobile Test to Treat units now offer flu

and RSV testing for symptomatic patients and prescriptions for Tamiflu for those found eligible. New Yorkers may present proof of a positive test — including at-home test results and test results from any external testing provider — at all mobile Test to Treat units to be evaluated for and immediately connected to Paxlovid. New Yorkers can visit [NYC.gov/COVIDTest](https://www.nyc.gov/COVIDTest) to find the mobile Test to Treat unit most convenient to them; and

- New Yorkers can call their doctor or 212-COVID19 to [ask about treatment](#) for COVID-19. Calling 212-COVID19 provides an immediate connection to a clinician who can refer patients to monoclonal antibody treatment or prescribe antiviral medications, like Paxlovid, and arrange to have it delivered to their home that same day for free.

Flu and RSV patients can also visit NYC Health + Hospitals' [ExpressCare](#) or call 631-EXP-CARE to talk to a provider who can provide high-quality urgent care and prescribe medications to the pharmacy of their choice.

As part of its winter planning, the city is monitoring case, hospitalization, and death data on COVID-19, flu, and RSV. This includes looking at emergency room admissions and available space in hospitals and intensive care units.

The city is paying particular attention to New Yorkers who are 65 years and older, who are at the highest risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses, as well as people with underlying medical conditions who are also at higher risk from these viruses. The city is taking the following steps to help keep New Yorkers at highest risk safe:

- Making calls to people 65 years or older with positive tests to get Paxlovid,
- Sending text messages to remind people to get their bivalent booster vaccine, and
- Calling on all health care providers to reach out to their patients who are at increased risk for severe illness.

New Yorker who are sick are encouraged to stay home, avoid close contact with others, and talk to a provider about what testing, care, and treatment options are available to them. Calling a provider is recommended or 212-COVID19 (212-268-4319) to [ask about treatment](#).

New Yorkers can find a nearby COVID-19 and flu vaccination provider by visiting [NYC Vaccine Finder](#) or by calling 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692) to schedule an appointment at certain sites, as well as to obtain other vaccination assistance.

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