

December 9: First Omicron Case Detected in Illinois, CDC Travel Guidelines, Monoclonal Antibody Treatment Availability and Workforce Vaccine Clinics

Today's issue features information about the first case of the omicron variant detected in Illinois, as well as new travel guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It also includes an update on monoclonal antibody treatment availability and workforce COVID-19 vaccine clinics.

FIRST OMICRON CASE DETECTED IN ILLINOIS AND CDC TRAVEL GUIDELINES

On December 7, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) issued a **siren alert** stating that the state's first case of COVID-19 caused by the omicron variant has been detected in a Chicago resident who contracted it following exposure to an individual visiting from another state. The Chicago resident — fully vaccinated with a booster dose — did not require hospitalization. According to the latest data from the **GISAID global variant tracker**, 43 cases of the omicron variant have been confirmed in the U.S.

In response to the growing number of COVID-19 cases associated with the omicron variant, the CDC updated its travel guidelines earlier this week. The agency is advising against travel to France, Jordan, Portugal and Tanzania. The CDC now classifies 83 destinations as "Level 4: COVID-19 Very High." The CDC also amended travel requirements for international travelers to the U.S., requiring pre-departure testing (regardless of vaccination status) within one day of travel. Travelers should also have a COVID-19 test three to five days after arrival in the U.S. and should self-monitor for symptoms after arrival even if the post-arrival test is negative. Travelers who are symptomatic or test positive for SARS-CoV-2 should isolate. The U.S. travel ban for South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique and Malawi remains in effect, and no additional countries have been added at this time.

For the latest information about omicron and other variants of concern, please visit the **Update on Omicron** and **Tracking SARS-CoV-2 Variants** pages on the WHO website. For more information about travel restrictions related to the omicron variant, visit the **CDC website**.

MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY TREATMENT AVAILABILITY

As the number of patients with COVID-19 continues to increase across Illinois, NM is experiencing an extremely high demand for monoclonal antibody (mAbs) treatment. The state of Illinois is experiencing a shortage of monoclonal antibodies as the demand currently exceeds the supply allocated to the state. As a result, NM's supply to offer this treatment is significantly reduced.

To ensure treatment is administered to those most likely to benefit, NM has developed a risk stratification process that is now live in Epic. The stratification system takes into account patient risk factors, immunocompromised conditions and vaccination status, all of which will be used to prioritize patients.

Additional clinical questions have been added to the mAbs referral order to ensure patients are assessed appropriately. Patients with the highest risk for severe disease will be prioritized for treatment based on availability.

We are unable to accommodate all requests for mAbs treatment at this time. For more information about mAbs treatment, visit the Treatment Resources page in the COVID-19 sections on [Physician Forum](#) and [NMI](#).

WORKFORCE VACCINE CLINICS AVAILABLE THIS WEEK


Workforce vaccine clinics for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster and first and second doses are available this week. To get a COVID-19 vaccine booster at a workforce vaccine clinic, **schedule an appointment** now (login required). First and second dose vaccines are available on a walk-in basis.

The Pfizer vaccine is also available at all NM Immediate Care Centers, except Mokena and Orland Park, Tuesday through Saturday.

All individuals age 18 and older who received the Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine are strongly encouraged to receive a booster dose. The booster is given at least six months after the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or two months after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. You do not have to get a booster from the same manufacturer as your initial vaccine.

NM is experiencing an increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations across the health system. Preliminary research suggests that infection with the omicron variant is less severe than with delta. Additionally, lab based experiments suggest that vaccination with a booster dose neutralizes the omicron variant while two doses demonstrate significantly less neutralizing titers. Please continue to educate patients about the importance of both vaccination and boosters as delta remains the predominant variant.

Thank you for your exceptional work and your continued commitment to providing *Patients First* care to the communities we serve.



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