



Mendocino County Public Health Department

Healthy People, Healthy Communities

Dr. Andrew Coren, County Health Officer



Press Release

Not for op-ed

Date: March 25, 2022

TO: MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA

FR: MENDOCINO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Notice: Public Health has confirmed a positive case of the **Omicron Subvariant BA.2** in Mendocino County.

The original Omicron Variant is still the most common form of COVID-19 in California, but cases of a sub-variant, BA.2, have been increasing across the state since January 2022. The County has just been notified of the first local case of this variant dated to early March.

This variant can re-infect those who've had Omicron, and some people who have been vaccinated. In California and other places with high vaccination rates, BA.2 does not seem to be driving increases in rates of cases, hospitalizations, or deaths. This variant does have the potential to cause severe disease for the vulnerable and unvaccinated individuals, while those who have been vaccinated and boosted are still very well protected against severe disease from BA.2.

So now is a good opportunity for everyone to review the latest guidance around reducing COVID risk:

- 1) Masks are strongly recommended in public indoor settings.
- 2) Get vaccinated and get boosted. It is the best protection against severe COVID.
- 3) Stay home from work and school when sick, get tested early.
- 4) Increase outdoor activities and ventilation indoors.

Public Health will continue to analyze test results and monitor the number of BA.2 cases carefully. While we remain optimistic due to decreasing case and hospitalization rates in Mendocino, we are concerned that another variant could set us back to surge levels in the future.

Free vaccines and booster shots continue to be available at primary care providers, pharmacies, and at the County's fixed and pop-up clinics. More information is available at <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/covid19>