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## **COVID-19 Vaccination Update July 2022: Variants and Vaccinations**

**This is Lang Xiong at the Hmong American Friendship Association. In this month's COVID-19 update, we're going to talk about two things you are probably hearing about: variants and vaccinations. They are very much related, and here's why.**

**If you are familiar with the flu virus and have had a yearly flu shot, you may be aware that each year, scientists create a new flu vaccine—hoping to provide protection from the flu variants that are likely to be most common during the coming flu season. Just as flu viruses change over time, so does the coronavirus. You might remember hearing about the delta variant. Now we are hearing about omicron and even subvariants of omicron—such as BA.5. These are all forms of COVID-19.**

**This virus is doing its best to keep spreading! It does this by changing, which is called mutating. When the virus mutates, vaccines are often less effective. While the newer variants do not seem to be more dangerous, they do spread more easily, so you may be hearing about more and more people who are sick. Some people—especially those who are not vaccinated—get very sick. With the rise of omicron variant, hospitalizations for COVID-19 are also rising again.**

### **But there IS some good news!**

**First, people who have been vaccinated and boosted are much less likely to get very sick or need to go to the hospital. Vaccinations still give us some protection. And scientists are working on new vaccines that should be available in the fall to offer even more protection against the omicron variants.**

**Second, we know how to limit the spread of COVID-19. If you are sick, stay home! When community spread is high in your area, wear a mask whenever you are indoors in a public space, like the grocery store. Right now, spread is high in Milwaukee County and in many other places around the state.**

**We are all tired of dealing with COVID-19. But ignoring it will not make it go away; it will only make things worse. Get vaccinated. Get boosted as soon as you are eligible. Vaccinate your children. Do your part against this virus. If you have questions about vaccinations, please call your doctor or your children's pediatrician—or reach out to our warmline at 414-465-9504.**

**TIME TO  
VACCINATE**  
STOP COVID-19