



MADERA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION TEAM

MADERA COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
200 W. FOURTH STREET / MADERA, CALIFORNIA 93637
(559) 675-7700 / FAX (559) 673-3302 / TDD (559) 675-8970

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MEDIA CONTACT

Name: Media Coordinator
Department: Madera County Department of Public Health
Email address: phmedia@maderacounty.com
Phone: (559) 514-4857

Four Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 Omicron BA.2 Sublineage in Madera County

This week, the Madera County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) is confirming the first four known cases of the BA.2 Omicron sublineage in Madera County residents. The first Omicron sublineage case was confirmed on March 16, 2022. The following three cases were confirmed on March 17, 2022. All of the individuals have ended isolation. Three were unvaccinated and one was fully vaccinated.

The Omicron BA.1 variant contributed to the majority of cases from the surge early this year. Research suggests that BA.2 is more transmissible than BA.1, but not more likely to lead to severe illness or hospitalization. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention projects that BA.2 currently makes up 23.1% of COVID-19 cases in the United States.

As we have seen throughout this winter, Omicron sublineages have the ability to partly evade the protection of vaccines, causing breakthrough infections to become more common. Vaccinations continue to remain highly effective at protecting against severe disease, hospitalizations, and death. Antiviral drugs such as Paxlovid, Molnupiravir, and Remdesivir also remain highly effective at treating BA.2 when prescribed by a doctor and taken soon after a positive test.

“Immunity begins to wane over time. It is important for Madera County residents to get boosted if it has been more than 5 months since you have received your second dose of Moderna or Pfizer, even if you were previously infected with COVID-19. For those who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you should receive a booster after 2 months,” said Dr. Simon Paul, Madera County Public Health Officer.

Vaccinations including boosters are available at no cost to the public. Visit [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or call 311 to make an appointment. Walk-ins are also welcome. MCDPH encourages residents ages 5 and up to get vaccinated if they have not already. Residents ages 12 and up should receive a booster when eligible.

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