



June 1, 2021

For immediate release

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“I have two teenagers in the midst of their three weeks between getting their COVID shots because I very strongly believe,” Dr. Bruner shares on Monday briefing.

Dr. Matthew Bruner, Regional West Health Services Chief Medical Officer and Chief of Obstetrics, joined the Tuesday, June 1 briefing to discuss adolescents and COVID vaccines.

The primary question Dr. Bruner wanted to address is a commonly heard statement about why younger people would want to get their COVID vaccine if their symptoms are mild. He relayed to listeners that adolescents can get COVID and get very sick with it.

“We vaccinate teenagers with MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), whooping cough, and before going to college their meningococcal vaccine, it’s not unheard of to vaccinate teenagers. I have two teenagers in the midst of their three weeks between getting their COVID shots because I very strongly believe,” Dr. Bruner shared.

He added, “Some teens are asking for their COVID vaccine. They have lived through school and wearing masks and they want to go back to normal. This is an interesting trend, and they are being proactive about it. My 11-year-old is looking forward to being vaccinated because she doesn’t want to have to wear a mask anymore.”

Some people have expressed concerns about the vaccines being under the FDA’s Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) rather than full approval. Dr. Bruner assured listeners being under this authorization means it is safe.

“We’ve seen this with monoclonal antibody treatment, in-patient treatment with remdesivir, and each phase of the COVID vaccine trials. In the regular world before COVID, this vaccination would already have been approved. It’s already met its merit and there have been millions of doses given, with thousands given in this age group. It’s been deemed safe,” affirmed Dr. Bruner.

The FDA just hasn’t given its final stamp of approval. The function of that is it keeps the cost free for the user. Once it’s approved, the cost goes to the patient, but the government has said it’s such high priority, they will continue paying for it for now and leave it under the EUA rather than give it full approval.

If an adolescent is afraid of needles and vaccinations, reasoning with them about the risk and benefits is important. Letting them make the choice by weighing the pros and cons with what it means by protecting grandparents and themselves.

The fertility concerns have been fueled by significant misinformation, Dr. Bruner explained in detail this to be untrue. If the reasoning were true, then everybody that had COVID would now be sterile and that is not the case. There have been many babies born to women who've had COVID and women who have become pregnant after having their COVID vaccine or who've had COVID. He has seen no literature about concerns of male sterility from the COVID vaccine.

Pfizer is available in the Panhandle and anyone 12 and older can get vaccinated! There is no charge for the vaccine.

- **Box Butte/Grant:** <https://tinyurl.com/25mwaapu> | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Dave's Pharmacy: Hemingford & Alliance**, Monday-Friday, 8 AM - 5:30 PM (Pfizer 2 PM- 5:30 PM)
 - **Alliance Community Pharmacy**, Monday-Friday, 7:30 AM - 6 PM
- **Cheyenne/Deuel:** <https://tinyurl.com/5b5uac8p> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Sidney Regional Medical Center**, June 9, Pfizer 8 AM - 12 PM
- **Dawes/Sioux:** <https://tinyurl.com/x5d5nnbn> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com)
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Western Community Health Resources**, Monday-Friday, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
- **Garden:** sign up at vaccinate.ne.gov - provider will call you
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Regional West Garden County Clinic Front Desk**, Monday-Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM
- **Kimball:** <https://tinyurl.com/d2u8txrs>
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Kimball Health Services**, Monday-Friday, 8 AM - 4:30 PM
- **Morrill:** <https://tinyurl.com/sb8mvumm>
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Morrill County Hospital Clinic**, Wednesdays, 8 AM - 4 PM
- **Sheridan:** <https://tinyurl.com/cvrmkv38>
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Gordon Rural Health Clinic**, Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM- 9:30 AM
- **Scotts Bluff/Banner:** <https://tinyurl.com/w6b84fkf> | [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com) | [safeway.com](https://www.safeway.com) | [walgreens.com](https://www.walgreens.com)
 - *Walk-ins welcome*
 - **Gering CAPWN Health Center**, Monday-Friday, 9 AM-12 PM & 1 PM-4 PM (Moderna or Johnson & Johnson)

- **Scottsbluff County Immunization Clinic**, Monday-Friday, 9:40 AM-12:30 PM & 1:30 PM-5:30 PM
- **Gering Civic Center**, June 2, 4 PM-6 PM

People who are fully COVID vaccinated will not be required to quarantine due to close contact. If you have lost your COVID vaccine card, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2zh7uhhu>.

Unified Command confirms 16 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Monday, May 24. The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined.

All Ages: 16

County	Cases
Banner	0
Box Butte	6
Cheyenne	0
Dawes	0
Deuel	0
Garden	1
Grant	0
Kimball	3
Morrill	1
Scotts Bluff	5
Sheridan	0
Sioux	0

Exposure Type

Community	38%
Close Contact	38%
Travel	0%
Under Investigation	25%

March 2, 2020-June 1, 2021

- **Total Tests Conducted: 39,158**
- **Positive: 9,117**
- **Last 14 days (active) cases: 48**
- **Last week's cases: 16**
- **Last week's positivity rate: 13.7%**
- **Deaths: 196**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 1**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 551**

Current COVID testing access can be found at www.pphd.org.

The Panhandle COVID dashboard is now being updated on Mondays only prior to the 3:30pm MT briefing and available at www.pphd.org. For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Panhandle Public Health District, Region 21, 22, and 23 Emergency Management, and Scotts Bluff County Health Department are working as a unified command on this evolving situation. Essential updates will be regularly communicated to the public and community partners.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.org.