

# BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

*Baltimore*

## DEAR NEIGHBORS,

As we near the end of summer we hope everyone has had the chance to enjoy some outdoor time and relaxation. In this issue of the Brancati Bulletin we highlight the importance of protecting ourselves and our communities by staying up to date with routine vaccinations. We also introduce a new vaccination to prevent serious respiratory complications from Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). The Brancati Center provided health services and diabetes education at three National Night Out events in Baltimore City on August 1st and looks forward to continuing to participate in coming years to support the health and safety of Baltimore City residents. Enjoy the rest of your summer and we look forward to hearing from you!

–The Brancati Center Team

## NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). This time provides us an opportunity to highlight the importance of routine vaccination for people of all ages and introduce the newest recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for the RSV vaccine.

### What is RSV?

RSV stands for Respiratory Syncytial Virus. It is a common virus that can cause cold-like symptoms and may affect individuals of all ages. The virus is spread through direct contact with droplets from another person's cough or sneeze, and from touching surfaces that have the virus and then touching your face before washing your hands. Typical symptoms of RSV include:

- cough
- runny nose
- decrease in appetite
- sneezing
- fever
- wheezing.

Most people recover from RSV within one to two weeks; however, it can also cause more serious lower respiratory disease, leading to shortness of breath and low oxygen levels. Individuals with underlying health conditions such as asthma, chronic heart and lung disease as well as weakened immune systems may develop severe disease from RSV. Older adults and infants are at higher risk of developing lower respiratory tract disease, which can cause pneumonia resulting in hospitalization or even death. According to the CDC, RSV leads to approximately 60,000–120,000 hospitalizations and 6,000–10,000 deaths among adults ages 65 years and older in the United States each year.



## COVID CORNER

There has been an uptick in positive COVID-19 rates nationally and we expect it to peak in the cooler months. Only 20% of Baltimoreans have received the updated bivalent booster.

Here are some COVID-19 tips:

- If you have cold symptoms, get tested. COVID-19 is still here.
- Make sure you're UP-TO-DATE with your vaccine:
  - Children who are younger than 6 years old should get recommendations on vaccination from their pediatricians.
  - Everyone 6 years and older should have had at least 1 updated bivalent COVID-19 booster (Pfizer or Moderna).
  - People over the age of 65 years and those who are immunocompromised are eligible for a 2nd bivalent COVID-19 booster.





## Spotlight:

### NEW RSV VACCINE

#### What is the RSV Vaccine?

The RSV vaccine can prevent lower respiratory tract disease from RSV infection. The CDC recommends adults 60 years and older receive a single dose of the RSV vaccine. This vaccine was proven safe and effective in large clinical studies both in the United States and internationally, and therefore was approved for use by the Food and Drug Administration in May 2023. RSV infections typically begin during the fall and peak in the winter. Therefore, it is advisable to speak with your health care provider about getting the vaccine in the coming months.

The CDC also recommends RSV vaccination for infants younger than 8 months old and for some children between the ages of 8 and 19 months who are at higher risk of severe RSV infection. To learn more about the RSV vaccine for infants and children, visit the CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/high-risk/infants-young-children.html>.

#### What are side effects of the RSV Vaccine?

The most commonly reported side effects of the RSV vaccine include injection site pain, fatigue, headache, and joint stiffness. Additional side effects may include fever, nausea, or diarrhea. As with any medicine, there is always the possibility of more rare reactions, including allergic reaction (hives, throat swelling, difficulty breathing), fast heartbeat, dizziness, or weakness. If you experience these symptoms after receiving the vaccine, you should contact your doctor immediately, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital.

You can learn more about the RSV vaccine and routine immunizations based on your age at the CDC's website <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/index.html>.

### The Sydney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center Education Sessions

#### Join our Webinar:

**Prostate Cancer:  
What You Need to  
Know**

September 19, 2023  
at 6:00 pm

REGISTER  
HERE



### NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

National Night Out Against Crime is a yearly event that spotlights crime prevention. It creates a positive, safe environment for the community to interact with police and fire departments, as well as local politicians and other community organizations. The Brancati Center was proud to provide health services at three National Night Out events in Baltimore City on August 1st:

- Oliver Senior Center - diabetes prevention education
- Frankford Neighborhood Association - diabetes prevention education
- Operation PULSE - blood pressure measurements and general health education

Thank you to our partners for inviting us to participate in these important events!

### Community Health Needs Survey

If you live in Baltimore City or Baltimore County, Johns Hopkins requests that you complete the Community Health Needs Assessment Survey (CHNA). Results from this survey provide important feedback to the health system and inform services and programming. The CHNA can be completed online using [this link](#) and the deadline is October 31st.

### Upcoming Community Events

**September 17th at 10:00am:** Walk with a Doc w/Dr. Nisa Maruthur at Lake Montebello

**September 22nd from 9:00-2:00pm:** Baltimore Housing Authority Health Fair, 201 N. Aisquith Street

**September 24th from 12:30-3:00pm:** Liberty Grace Church of God Friends and Family Vaccine Event. COVID-19, flu, RSV and pneumonia vaccines will be offered. Register here:

