

0 cases in isolation
0 contacts in quarantine
680 people in Shutesbury are fully vaccinated

In our messages to the public, the Shutesbury Board of Health frequently gives public health advice. This is not to be confused with advice about personal health.

It is not the responsibility of this Board of Health, nor of any public health body, to promote or inform about means of *personal* health maintenance. Personal health decisions--such as whether to be vaccinated or not, or to take a medication or not, or what sort of diet to eat or supplements to take, or whether to practice yoga, go running, lift weights, etc--are decisions best made on the basis of individual preferences and abilities, and in consultation with the health care provider who best knows one's medical history.

A public health body, on the other hand, is charged, among other things, with the control and prevention of communicable disease on the *community* level. To this end, this board stays informed by research in the fields of infectious disease and public health, as presented by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the US Centers for Disease Control. To our community we in turn convey information about measures that have been shown by science to reduce disease transmission. In the case of COVID-19, these are: social distancing, mask wearing, handwashing, avoidance of crowds, isolation and quarantine where indicated, and vaccination.

All vaccines carry the risk of side effects, as do any injected or ingested materials. The decision by public health officials to widely vaccinate against any particular disease is made when the risk from the disease outweighs the risk from the vaccine. Currently available vaccines are safe and effective. As we seek the end of this pandemic this Board of Health will continue to recommend that those who can be vaccinated, do so. We will continue to provide links on our website to sources of detailed information about available vaccines. We respect every individual's right to choose.