

COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Doses Reference Guide for All Ages



You or your child got vaccinated with a primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine to protect yourself and others from severe illness, hospitalizations, and even death from COVID-19. Studies have shown that while COVID-19 vaccines remain effective, they are associated with a drop in protection over time.

Now, getting boosted remains the most effective way to continue this protection.

Check out the chart below to see if you or your child are eligible for one or more booster doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.*

	Who's eligible?	When should I get a booster?	Can I get a second booster?	Which booster?
If you got... Pfizer	Everyone 5+ should get their booster dose to be up to date.	At least 5 months after completing the primary series of Pfizer vaccine.	Everyone 50+ should get a 2nd booster at least 4 months after receiving the 1st booster.	Adults 18+ can get a booster dose of any mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Children 5-17 should get a Pfizer booster.
If you got... Moderna	Adults 18+ should get their booster dose to be up to date.	At least 5 months after completing the primary series of Moderna vaccine.	Everyone 50+ should get a 2nd booster at least 4 months after receiving the 1st booster.	A booster dose of any mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
If you got... Johnson & Johnson	Adults 18+ should get their booster dose to be up to date.	At least 2 months after completing the primary series of J&J vaccine.	Everyone 50+ and those who received a J&J vaccine for their primary and booster dose should get a 2nd booster at least 4 months after receiving the 1st booster.	A booster dose of any mRNA vaccine is preferred over J&J for 1st booster. 2nd booster should be any mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
If you got... Novavax	If you got Novavax for your primary series, you are not eligible for a booster dose of any brand at this time.			

If you are moderately or severely immunocompromised guidelines will vary.

*People who recently had SARS-CoV-2 infection may consider **delaying their first or second COVID-19 vaccine booster dose by 3 months from symptom onset or positive test (if infection was asymptomatic)**. [Studies have shown](#) that increased time between infection and vaccination may result in an improved immune response to vaccination. Also, a low risk of reinfection has been observed in the weeks to months following infection. Individual factors such as risk of COVID-19 [severe disease](#), [COVID-19 community level](#), or characteristics of the predominant SARS-CoV-2 strain should be taken into account when determining whether to delay getting a booster dose after infection.

COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Doses FAQs

Why are booster doses important?

Booster doses will help provide continued protection against severe disease. Booster doses were previously recommended only for populations at high risk for severe COVID-19, but the recommendation expanded to include those 5 years and older who received a Pfizer primary series to help increase protection against COVID-19 illness. Certain populations, such as those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, may require additional doses to increase immunity. This is especially important with the rise of more contagious variants and cases of COVID-19 increasing across the United States.

If booster doses are needed, does that mean that the vaccines aren't working?

No. The current COVID-19 vaccines we have in the U.S. are working well to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death, even against variants. However, public health experts are seeing reduced protection against mild and moderate COVID-19 illness, especially among high-risk populations.

What should I bring to a booster dose appointment?

[Please take your/your child's vaccination card](#) to the booster dose appointment so the provider can first confirm that the initial vaccine series was completed. If the card was lost, the provider can look up your record.

What's the difference between an additional vaccine dose and a booster dose?

An additional dose is for immunocompromised patients who completed a 2-dose mRNA vaccine series (Pfizer or Moderna) but did not have a strong enough immune response.

A booster dose is given to enhance or restore protection and/or immunity after the initial vaccine series waned over time.

Does the vaccine brand matter for the booster dose?

You can get a different vaccine for the booster dose than the vaccine you got for the primary series if you are 18 or older and received Johnson & Johnson or a two dose mRNA vaccine for your primary series. The CDC made their decision following a careful review of the latest data (Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, mix and match boosters), and robust and deliberative discussion around booster shots. Novavax currently has no recommended booster and should not be mixed or matched with other COVID-19 vaccines. **People 17 and younger may only get the Pfizer vaccine for the booster dose if they received a Pfizer primary series.**

When is someone considered fully vaccinated?

You or your child are **fully vaccinated** two weeks after receiving all recommended doses in the primary series of COVID-19 vaccination.

You or your child are **up to date** with COVID-19 vaccination when all doses in the primary series and [all recommended boosters](#) have been received, when eligible.

Can the booster be received with other vaccines, like for flu?

Yes. You or your child can get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines. You do not need to schedule your child's [required school vaccinations](#) or other recommended vaccines separately from COVID-19 vaccination. A COVID-19 vaccine appointment is another opportunity to get you or your child caught up on all recommended vaccines.

More questions? Visit:
doh.wa.gov/covidbooster