



COVID-19 Vaccines - Frequently Asked Questions

BOOSTER DOSES



To view these and other vaccine FAQs online, visit the [COVID-19 vaccine webpage](#).

Why are COVID-19 vaccine booster doses important?

Booster doses are used for many different vaccines to provide continued protection against severe disease.

The [COVID-19 vaccines continue to work well](#) at protecting people from severe disease. Over time, however, the level of this protection can weaken. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine booster is important because it strengthens your immunity. This gives you better protection from getting very sick, being hospitalized, and even dying.

Get the booster dose that is recommended for you (see below).

What is an updated COVID-19 booster?

An updated booster is also known as a “bivalent” booster. It is a vaccine that has been updated to target both the original strain of the COVID-19 virus as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron variants.

Updated boosters can help restore protection against COVID-19 that has decreased over time. They can also provide broader protection against newer variants.

All Pfizer and Moderna booster doses are updated (bivalent) vaccines. The original (monovalent) Pfizer and Moderna boosters are no longer available. The Novavax booster is an original (monovalent) vaccine.

Who should get a COVID-19 booster dose?

The updated (bivalent) boosters are recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older, with one exception. Children 6 months through 4 years of age who finished a Pfizer vaccine primary series are not eligible for a booster dose at this time.

One updated booster is recommended at least 2 months after the last COVID-19 vaccine dose (either the final primary series dose or the last original [monovalent] booster). This is regardless of how many original (monovalent) boosters or which type of vaccine(s) were received in the past. Children ages 11 and under get a lower dose of the updated booster than teens and adults.

Ages 5 and older

- Children age 5 who completed a Moderna primary series can get either a Pfizer or Moderna updated booster.
- Children age 5 who completed a primary series of Pfizer vaccine get the Pfizer updated booster.
- Everyone ages 6 and older can get either a Pfizer or Moderna updated booster.

Ages 6 months-4 years

- Children who completed a primary series of Moderna vaccine can get the Moderna updated booster.
- Children who completed a primary series of Pfizer vaccines are not eligible for a booster dose at this time. Note: the Pfizer primary series for this age group now includes a bivalent (updated) vaccine for the 3rd dose.



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Alternative booster option for certain people ages 18 and older

People ages 18 and older can receive a Novavax (monovalent) vaccine as a booster instead of getting the recommended updated Pfizer or Moderna booster if they meet all of the following criteria:

1. They are unable or unwilling to receive an updated booster (for instance, if they are severely allergic to the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines); AND
2. They have completed primary series vaccination; AND
3. They have never had a booster before.

The Novavax booster is given at least 6 months after completing the last dose of the primary series.

Visit the interactive *Find Out When to Get a Booster* tool on the CDC [Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters](#) webpage to see when you (or your child) can get a booster.

Talk to your doctor if you have questions.

Can I get a booster if I had COVID-19?

Yes, you should get a booster if you have had COVID-19. It is recommended that you stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines, including boosters even if you already had COVID-19. This is because vaccines provide added protection.

If you recently had COVID-19, you may consider delaying a vaccine dose (primary series or booster) by 3 months from when your symptoms started or when you first had a positive test (if you didn't have any symptoms). Your risk of re-infection is less likely in the first few months after recent COVID-19 infection. A longer time between infection and getting a vaccine may also result in a better immune response. However, you should not put the dose off for more than 3 months and it is safe to receive the vaccine earlier.

If you have COVID-19 now, you should wait at least until you have finished isolation before getting a COVID-19 dose. This is so that you don't spread COVID-19 to healthcare workers and others when you go to get vaccinated.

What are the risks of getting a booster?

Reactions after booster doses are like those after primary doses. Most side effects are mild to moderate and last 2 days or less. As with the primary series, serious side effects are rare. For more details, visit the CDC webpage [Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines](#). The benefits of getting a booster dose outweigh any known and potential risks.

Will I need to show a doctor's note or prescription to get a booster dose?

No, you do not need a doctor's note or prescription to get a booster dose. When you go to the location, take proof of vaccination such as your CDC white card or digital vaccination record. Visit the Public Health [How to Get Vaccinated](#) webpage for more information.



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Where can I get more information?



- To print or view this FAQ or FAQs on other COVID-19 vaccine topics, scan the QR code or visit [COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#).
- CDC webpage [Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters](#).
- [VaccinateLACounty.com](#) – including [COVID-19 Vaccine Schedules](#) with graphics to show when each dose is due and information on [How to Get Vaccinated](#).
- Talk to your doctor if you have questions.

