



## COVID-19 Booster Dose FAQ

**Q. Who is eligible for a COVID-19 booster dose?**

A. The CDC recommends that people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems receive an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after a second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. The age groups authorized to receive the booster dose are unchanged from the primary vaccination series:

- Pfizer-BioNTech: age 12+ and Moderna: age 18+
- There is no booster available for patients who received the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine

**Q. Why do some immunocompromised people need a booster dose?**

A. Studies indicate immunocompromised people don't always build the same level of immunity after vaccination the way non-immunocompromised people do, and may benefit from an additional dose to ensure adequate protection against COVID-19. About 3% of the population falls into the *moderately to severely immunocompromised category*. All immunocompromised people should talk to their healthcare provider about their condition and whether getting an additional COVID-19 vaccine dose is appropriate for them.

**Q. Which conditions qualify for a booster dose?**

A. At this time, only a *very small number of people* qualify for a COVID-19 booster. You qualify if you have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system (such as Prednisone, Cellcept, Tacrolimus, or Cyclosporine)
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response (i.e. Remicade, Enbrel, Humira, Rituxin, Cosentyx, Tremfya, Xeljanz)

**Q. When can I get my booster dose?**

A. The CDC recommends the third dose of mRNA vaccine be administered at least 28 days after the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna series. That is the minimum amount of time between the initial series and the booster dose. As of now, there is no maximum limit to the booster dose timing.

**Q. Which brand of booster vaccine should I get?**

A. For people who received either Pfizer or Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine series, a third dose of the same mRNA vaccine should be used. If the mRNA vaccine product given for the first two doses is not available (or is unknown), either mRNA product may be given.

**Q. What should I do if I received the J&J vaccine but I also want a booster dose?**

A. The FDA has not approved booster doses for those who received the J&J vaccine. There is not enough data at this time to determine whether immunocompromised people who received the J&J COVID-19 vaccine also have an improved antibody response following an additional dose of the same vaccine. Studies are currently under way to address this issue.

**Q. What side effects should I expect from a booster dose?**

A. Reactions reported after the third dose of mRNA vaccine are similar to that of the two-dose series. The most common side effects are fatigue and injection site pain. Overall, most symptoms are mild to moderate.

**Q. How do I get my booster dose?**

A. If you qualify, please walk in to any Primary Health clinic offering COVID booster doses. Visit [www.PrimaryHealth.com](http://www.PrimaryHealth.com) to find a location.

**Q. What should I do after my booster dose?**

A. People who are immunocompromised should be counseled about the potential for a reduced immune response to COVID-19 vaccines and the need to continue to follow current prevention measures (including wearing a mask, staying 6 feet apart from others they don't live with, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces). Close contacts of immunocompromised people should also be strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect these people.

*Adapted from the CDC 8/13/2021: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>*