



COVID-19

COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters

Updated Apr. 15, 2022

What You Need to Know

- As with vaccines for other diseases, people are best protected against infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 when they [stay up to date with vaccinations](#).
- COVID-19 vaccines continue to protect people from getting seriously ill, being hospitalized, and even dying—especially people who have received a booster.
- CDC recommends everyone ages 12 years and older receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series. Some people can receive two boosters.
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised have specific COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, including recommendations for a booster. Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccine recommendations for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised](#).

Choosing Your COVID-19 Booster

Three COVID-19 vaccines are authorized or approved for use in the United States to prevent COVID-19. Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 mRNA vaccines) are preferred. You may get Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine [in some situations](#).

Who Can Get a Booster

PRIMARY SERIES COVID-19 VACCINE

Pfizer-BioNTech

Who should get one booster:

Everyone 12 years and older

Who can get a second booster:

Adults 50 years and older

When to get your booster:

At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

If eligible for a second booster, at least 4 months after your first booster

Which booster should you get?

- Adults 18 years and older should get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) for the first booster in most* situations
- The second booster must be an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine
- Teens 12–17 years old may only get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster

PRIMARY SERIES COVID-19 VACCINE

Moderna

Who should get one booster:

Adults 18 years and older

Who can get a second booster:

Adults 50 years and older

When to get your booster:

At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

If eligible for a second booster, at least 4 months after your first booster

Which booster should you get?

For the first booster, an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) is preferred in most* situations

The second booster must be an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine

PRIMARY SERIES COVID-19 VACCINE

Johnson & Johnson's Janssen*

Who should get a booster:

Adults 18 years and older

Who can get a second booster:

Anyone who received a J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for both their primary dose and booster

Adults 50 years and older who first received a J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of what type of booster they received

When to get a booster:

At least 2 months after receiving your J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination

If eligible for a second booster, at least 4 months after your first booster

Which booster should you get?

For the first booster, an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) is preferred in most* situations

The second booster must be an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine

*Although mRNA vaccines are preferred for the first booster, J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine [may be considered in some situations](#).

Scheduling Your Booster

If you need help scheduling your booster, contact the location that set up your previous appointment. If you need to get your booster in a location different from where you received your previous vaccination, there are several ways you can [find a vaccine provider](#).

Find a COVID-19 vaccine or booster: Search [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you.

What to Expect during and after Your Booster Shot Appointment

- Bring [your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card](#) to your booster appointment so your provider can fill in the information about your booster dose. If you did not receive a card at your first appointment, contact the vaccination site where you got your first dose or your [state health department](#) to find out how you can get a card.
- You may experience [side effects](#) after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. These are normal signs that your body is building protection against COVID-19.
- If you have enrolled in [v-safe](#), [enter your booster dose](#) in your [v-safe](#) account, the system will send you daily health check-ins. You will be able to tell CDC about any side effects.
- A person is considered “boosted” and [up to date](#) right after getting their first booster. Getting a second booster is not necessary to be considered up to date at this time.

If You Were Vaccinated Outside of the United States

If you completed a Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine primary series outside of the United States, you should follow the guidance above for boosters.

Otherwise, if you were vaccinated abroad with other COVID-19 vaccines, you can get a booster if you are 12 years or older and you either:

- Received all the recommended doses of a [World Health Organization emergency use listing \(WHO-EUL\) COVID-19 vaccine](#) [↗](#), not approved or authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Or completed a mix and match series composed of any combination of [FDA-approved](#), [FDA-authorized](#), or [WHO-EUL COVID-19 vaccines](#)

If you meet the above requirements, you can get a single booster of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) at least 5 months after getting all recommended doses or completing a mix and match COVID-19 vaccine series.

Related Pages

- › [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety and Monitoring](#)
- › [Understanding How COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- › [Ensuring COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- › [Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- › [COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately to Severely Immunocompromised People](#)



For Healthcare and Public Health

Considerations for Use of a COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Dose

More Information

[ACIP Presentation Slides, December 16, 2021](#)

[ACIP Presentation Slides, November 19, 2021](#)

[ACIP Presentation Slides, October 21, 2021](#)

[ACIP Presentation Slides, September 22–23, 2021](#)

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