



COVID-19 Booster Dose FAQs

(Updated 02-17-2022)

Q: Are booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine recommended?

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone age 12 and older receive a booster dose once they're eligible:

- Five months after the second dose of Pfizer or Moderna
- Two months after a dose of Johnson & Johnson

People who are immunocompromised are recommended to receive a booster dose:

- Three months after their additional (third) dose of a Moderna or Pfizer vaccine
- Two months after their additional (second) dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine

People 12–17 years of age are eligible to receive only the Pfizer vaccine.

Q. Is there a waiting period after getting a booster dose?

Yes. People should be monitored for immediate side effects for 15–30 minutes after vaccination.

Q. Where can people get a booster dose?

Booster doses are widely available through pharmacies, doctor's offices and clinics, as COVID-19 vaccine is today. Use the [vaccine locator map](#) to find a vaccine provider near you, or call 211 or 866-698-6155 for information and assistance in any language. Proof of eligibility is not required, though providers may ask for confirmation of your last dose.

Q. How do booster doses work?

The first vaccine series built up the immune system to make the antibodies needed to fight the disease. Over time, the immune response weakens. A booster dose builds on the initial response and tends to result in higher antibody levels that help people maintain their immunity longer.

Q. Is the booster dose different from other COVID-19 vaccine doses?

The Moderna booster dose is a half dose; this means it is half the amount of the first or second doses of Moderna. This is the only difference.

There is no difference between the first, second or booster doses for the Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

Q: Should someone who is eligible for an additional dose and a booster get both?

Yes. An additional dose is recommended for people who are immunocompromised and who therefore may not have developed a strong immune response to their primary vaccine series. A booster dose is recommended to account for waning immunity.

Moderna and Pfizer: The [CDC recommends](#) immunocompromised people who received a third dose of an mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) vaccine should also get a booster dose three months after the third dose.

Johnson & Johnson: People who are immunocompromised and received a dose of Johnson & Johnson as their primary series should receive an additional dose of an mRNA vaccine at least 28 days after their initial dose. Then they should get a booster dose two months later to increase their immunity and protection from disease; Moderna or Pfizer are recommended for this booster dose, but Johnson & Johnson may also be given.

If people who are immunocompromised and received Johnson & Johnson got a booster dose *before* their additional dose, they should receive an additional dose of an mRNA vaccine two months after their booster dose.

Q: What do providers need to know about safety and reporting after administering a booster dose?

Providers should monitor for adverse events, including local and systemic reactions. Providers are encouraged to report any adverse reactions to the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting Database (VAERS). <https://vaers.hhs.gov>

Q: I received one dose of Moderna and one dose of Pfizer. Which booster dose should I get?

People who received a mixed dose series can receive either a Pfizer or a Moderna booster. You may also choose to receive a Johnson & Johnson vaccine dose instead. Speak to your health care provider if you have additional concerns.

Q: I received Johnson & Johnson. If I get a Pfizer or Moderna booster, do I need two doses?

No. A booster dose is a single dose for all three vaccines, so you only need one additional dose of vaccine after your Johnson & Johnson primary vaccine: full-dose Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson, or a half-dose Moderna.

Q: Does a parent or guardian need to accompany a 15 – 17-year-old to receive their booster dose?

No. Under Oregon law, minors 15 and older may give consent to receive medical treatment, including vaccinations, when provided by a physician, physician assistant, naturopath, nurse practitioner, dentist or optometrist, or other professionals operating under the license of these providers.

Q: Do people need to provide proof of vaccination to get a booster dose?

No. However, your provider may ask when you received your last vaccination, as administration should be within the authorized time period. All vaccinators should check the ALERT system to determine if the timing is appropriate.

Document accessibility: For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact the COVID-19 Communications Unit at 1-971-673-2411, 711 TTY or COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhsoha.state.or.us.