

COVID-19 Booster Shot Recommendations

Everyone age 12 and older should get a COVID-19 booster shot as soon as they are eligible so that they can be up to date with their vaccines. Up to date with your vaccines means you are fully vaccinated, and have received additional doses and boosters, if and when eligible. People who were vaccinated outside of the U.S. or participated in vaccine clinical trials may also be eligible for a booster shot.

What is a booster shot, and why is it being recommended?

A booster shot is an additional dose of a vaccine to provide added protection. The vaccines are still very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19. However, protection against mild to moderate illness is not as strong and may decrease over time.

A booster shot can provide extra protection to you, your family and your community by reducing your chances of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to others, including children too young to be vaccinated, and people at increased risk of severe COVID-19. Booster shots are especially important given the presence of more contagious variants of the virus.

When can I get my booster shot?

When you can get a booster shot depends on which vaccine brand you received for your primary doses:

- If you got the **Pfizer or Moderna vaccine**, you can get a booster shot at least **five months** after your last dose.
- If you got the **Johnson & Johnson vaccine**, you can get a booster shot at least **two months** after your vaccine.

Does the booster shot need to be the same vaccine brand as my primary doses?

No. You can choose which brand to get. It is recommended that you get the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for your booster shot, if you can. Speak with your health care provider if you have questions about which vaccine to get. If you need help finding a provider, call **311**.

Do the booster shots have the same ingredients as the vaccines used for the primary doses?

Yes. The Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson booster shots are the same vaccine as the primary doses. The Moderna booster shot has the same ingredients but is a smaller dose of the vaccine that is given for the first two doses.

Are there side effects from the booster shot?

You may get side effects from the booster shot. Side effects are usually mild to moderate and last for one to three days. Side effects may include arm soreness, headaches, body aches, tiredness and fever. Serious side effects are rare but may occur after a booster shot.

I am immunocompromised and got a third vaccine dose. Can I get a booster shot?

People age 12 and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised and received a third dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine should get a booster shot at least five months after their third dose. For information about third doses, visit on.nyc.gov/thirddose.

I received a COVID-19 vaccine outside of the U.S. or as part of a clinical trial. Can I get a booster shot?

You should get a booster dose of the **Pfizer vaccine** at least five months after your last vaccine dose if you are age 12 and older and:

- Received all primary doses of a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the World Health Organization (WHO) but not authorized or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Received all primary doses of any combination of FDA-approved, FDA-authorized, or WHO-authorized COVID-19 vaccines
- Received all primary doses of a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the WHO, but not authorized or approved by the FDA, as part of a clinical trial
- Received all primary doses as part of the Moderna vaccine in children clinical trials

People who were vaccinated as part of clinical trials must have received an active vaccine, not a placebo. Speak with your provider if you have questions.

Where can I get a booster shot?

You can get a booster shot anywhere that offers the brand of vaccine you need. You do not need to go to the same place where you got your first two doses. To find a vaccination site, visit nyc.gov/vaccinefinder and choose “Pfizer” or “Moderna” from the “Any vaccine” drop-down. You can also call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692) for help finding a City-run vaccination site. To schedule a free in-home vaccination, visit nyc.gov/homevaccine or call 877-829-4692.

Can I get a booster shot at the same time as other vaccines, such as the flu vaccine?

Yes. You can get a booster shot at the same time as other vaccines, or any time before or after. If you have not yet gotten your flu shot, try to find a site that offers both vaccines, such as many pharmacies.

Is a booster shot free?

Yes. If you have insurance, it may be billed, but you will not be charged an administration fee or other fee.

What documents do I need to show to get a booster shot?

You will need to show a document with your date of birth, such as a driver’s license, nondriver ID, IDNYC, birth certificate or passport. Bring your vaccination card if you have it.

Do I need a booster shot to be fully vaccinated?

No. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (such as Pfizer or Moderna) or two weeks after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. However, you will be up to date with your vaccines after you receive a booster. Also, some employers and places may require proof of a booster shot for people who are eligible. Quarantine requirements may differ depending on if you have received a booster shot.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

1.13.22