

COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

Additional Dose for Immunocompromised People

First Things First:

The FDA and CDC have authorized a third dose of mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna) for moderately to severely immunocompromised people. People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 because they are more at risk of serious, prolonged illness. People who have compromised immune systems may benefit from an additional dose to make sure they have enough protection against COVID-19.

Who needs an additional COVID-19 vaccine?

Currently, [CDC is recommending](#) that moderately to severely immunocompromised people receive an additional dose. This includes people who 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
- 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, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response

People should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them.

Where can I get an additional dose if I am moderately to severely immunocompromised?

First, people should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them.

Individuals can go to any vaccination sites offering the mRNA vaccine they received for their first two doses. This includes: state vaccination sites, local health departments, pharmacies, retail stores, and other healthcare providers. You can find a list of Health Department clinics [here](#).

What vaccine type should I get for my third dose?

The same mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) that you received for your first two doses. Currently, the FDA and CDC have not authorized the J&J vaccine for an additional dose and individuals who received the J&J vaccine are not recommended to receive additional doses at this time.

If I got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, should I get an additional dose?

Currently, the FDA and CDC have not authorized the J&J vaccine for an additional dose. There is not enough data at this time to determine whether immunocompromised people who received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine also have an improved antibody response following an additional dose of the same vaccine.

I got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and I would now like to receive the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. What should I do?

A single, valid vaccination series (i.e., a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine) should be administered. People are not recommended to receive more than one complete COVID-19 vaccination series. At this time, no booster shots have been recommended by the CDC.

How long after my initial COVID-19 vaccines can I get an additional dose?

CDC recommends the additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine be administered at least four weeks after a second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines.

What are the risks of receiving an additional vaccine dose?

There is limited information about the risks of receiving an additional dose of vaccine, and the safety, efficacy, and benefit of additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine in immunocompromised people continues to be evaluated. So far, reactions reported after the third mRNA dose were similar to that of the two-dose series: fatigue and pain at injection site were the most commonly reported side effects, and overall, most symptoms were mild to moderate.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>