Additional Dose & Booster Dose FAQs

The County of San Diego is offering additional doses and booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to eligible groups. See below for answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs). Content subject to change. Please speak to your provider to learn more.

What’s the difference between an additional dose and booster dose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional dose:</th>
<th>Booster dose:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for moderately to severely immunocompromised people four weeks after receiving the second Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. An additional dose is needed because immunocompromised people sometimes do not build up enough protection after the first two doses.</td>
<td>Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for those who received the Pfizer vaccine six months after the second dose. Since one’s immunity may wane over time, a booster dose is needed to maintain protection against COVID-19 for longer. Recommendations for Moderna and Johnson&amp;Johnson/Janssen (J&amp;J) are coming soon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who can get an additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

• As of August 23, 2021, the CDC is recommending that moderately to severely immunocompromised people receive another dose, at least 28 days after your 2nd dose of vaccine.

• Based on the following criteria below, these persons should receive the following dose:
  o Receiving active cancer treatment.
  o Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
  o Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
  o Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, WiskottAldrich syndrome).
  o Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
  o Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that suppress the immune response.

Who can get a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

• As of September 27, 2021, the CDC recommends the following groups of people who received the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine should receive a single booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, at least 6 months after your 2nd dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech’s series. Currently, boosters are available for the Pfizer vaccine only; Moderna and J&J vaccine booster vaccinations are coming soon.

• The following groups are recommended for a booster dose based on the criteria below:
  o People 65 years and older.
  o Residents in long-term care facilities.
  o People aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions* or at increased risk of social inequities (including communities of color and others at risk).

• In addition, the following groups of people who received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and are fully vaccinated may receive a booster dose:
  o People aged 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions.*
  o People aged 18-64 years who are at an increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission due to occupational or institutional settings.
    ▪ Includes healthcare workers, first responders, teachers and day care staff, grocery workers, and workers in homeless shelters or prisons.

When will I be eligible for an additional dose or booster dose?

• At this time, the County of San Diego is not offering an additional dose or booster dose for those who do not meet the criteria cited above. The County is following recommendations made by the CDC and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and will provide more information about future eligible vaccines and groups as soon as it becomes available.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, please visit:
coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine
Can people who got the Moderna or J&J vaccines get a booster dose?

• No, not at this time. Currently, the booster authorization only applies to people who got the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. More data on the effectiveness and safety of Moderna and J&J booster vaccines are expected soon.

Am I still considered “fully vaccinated” if I don’t get a booster dose?

• Yes. Everyone is still considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their 2nd dose in a two-dose series, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

What are my next steps if I meet the eligibility criteria?

• If you meet the eligibility criteria, the additional dose or booster dose can be scheduled the same way as the previous dose(s) before becoming fully vaccinated.
• You may talk to your doctor about the need to get an additional dose or booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and the best timing. Eligible persons can also visit any County of San Diego vaccine sites, local health centers and pharmacies, and partners. Before your appointment, remember to:
  o Bring your COVID-19 vaccination card.
  o Take it easy the night before to ensure potential symptoms are not a result of other unrelated activities.
  o Anticipate the COVID-19 vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, feeling tired, or mild fever.
  o Do not take acetaminophen or ibuprofen in anticipation of potentially having side effects from the vaccine.
    ▪ Taking these medications for the purpose of preventing post-vaccination symptoms is not currently recommended.
  o When you go to your appointment, it is highly recommended to cover your mouth and nose with a mask when you are around others indoors.

What if my vaccination card was accidentally lost or damaged?

• If you damaged, misplaced, or are missing your vaccination card, your COVID-19 vaccine records should be registered in the California Immunization Registry (CAIR).
• Most healthcare providers are connected to CAIR, so the provider from your last COVID-19 vaccine should have you in the system.
  • If you are already in the system, you may ask for another vaccination card when you arrive to your appointment for your additional dose or booster dose.
  • You can also request your vaccination record directly from CAIR.
• You are encouraged to register your vaccination records through the state of California’s Digital COVID-19 Vaccination Portal (DCVP) in the event you need and easily accessible proof of vaccination resource.

*Underlying conditions include:
• Cancer
• Chronic kidney disease
• Chronic lung diseases, including COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension
• Dementia or other neurological conditions
• Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)
• Down syndrome
• Heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension)
• HIV infection
• Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system)
• Liver disease
• Overweight or obesity
• Pregnancy
• Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
• Smoking, current or former
• Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant
• Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain
• Substance use disorders

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, please visit: coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine