

# 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.

## COVID-19 VACCINE ELIGIBILITY

Vaccine Brand	Dose	Timeline	Age				
			5-11	12-17	18-49	50-64	65+
Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty)	Primary 2-doses	at least 21 days after the first dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Additional dose moderately and severely immunocompromised	at least 28 days after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pfizer dose	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Booster dose	at least 6 months after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pfizer dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Booster (4 <sup>th</sup> ) dose moderately and severely immunocompromised	at least 6 months after 3 <sup>rd</sup> Pfizer dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Moderna	Primary 2-doses	at least 28 days after the first dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Additional dose Moderately and severely immunocompromised	at least 28 days after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Moderna dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Booster dose	at least 6 months after 2 <sup>nd</sup> Moderna dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Booster (4 <sup>th</sup> ) dose moderately and severely immunocompromised	at least 6 months after 3 <sup>rd</sup> Moderna dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Janssen/ Johnson & Johnson	1 dose		X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Booster dose	at least 2 months after 1 <sup>st</sup> Janssen/Johnson & Johnson dose	X	X	✓	✓	✓

## What's the difference between an additional dose and booster dose?

**Additional dose:** Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for [moderately to severely immunocompromised](#) people four weeks after receiving the second Pfizer-BioNTech (Pfizer) or Moderna vaccine. An additional dose is needed because [immunocompromised](#) people sometimes do not build up enough protection after the first two doses.

**Booster dose:** Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for those who received the Pfizer-BioNTech (Pfizer) or Moderna vaccine six months after their second dose, or two months after their first dose of the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen (J&J) vaccine. Since one's immunity may wane over time, a booster dose is needed to maintain protection against COVID-19 for longer.

## 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 who received either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine](#) receive a third dose of the of the same COVID-19 vaccine, [at least 28 days after their second dose](#).
- Only ages 12 through 17 years old who received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for an additional dose.
- Ages 12 through 17 years may only receive an additional dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
- Based on the following criteria below, these persons should receive the following dose:
  - Receiving active cancer treatment.
  - 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, WiskottAldrich syndrome).
  - Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
  - 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 November 15, 2021, the California Department of Public Health recommends the following groups of people who received the Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J COVID-19 vaccines should receive a booster dose using any one of the three approved or emergency use authorized (EUA) COVID-19 vaccines:
  - [Ages 18 years and older who have met the 6-month original vaccination series time period for the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or it has been at least 2 months since their J&J vaccine. Individuals may self-determine their risk of exposure.\\*](#)
- People receiving a booster dose may choose which of the three vaccines they would like to receive. The CDC have expanded the [recommendations](#) for booster doses to allow heterologous (mix and match) dosing.
- Moderately and severely immunocompromised people aged  $\geq 18$  years who completed an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary series and received an additional mRNA vaccine dose **may** receive a single COVID-19 booster dose (Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J) at least 6 months after completing their third mRNA vaccine dose. In such situations, people who are moderately and severely immunocompromised [may receive a total of four COVID-19 vaccine doses](#).
- Moderately and severely immunocompromised individuals aged  $\geq 18$  years who received a single J&J dose primary series **should** receive a single COVID-19 booster vaccine (Pfizer, Moderna or J&J) at least 2 months (8 weeks) after receiving their initial J&J primary dose. A person who received one primary dose of J&J COVID-19 vaccine should not receive more than two vaccine doses

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, please visit:

[coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine](https://coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine)



## Can any COVID-19 vaccine dose use heterologous (mix and match)?

- No. **Only booster doses are authorized to mix and match.** A single booster dose of any available COVID-19 vaccines may be given as a heterologous dose following completion of their vaccine series with a different available COVID-19 vaccine.
  - **Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine** recipients authorized for boosters may receive a booster dose of Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after completing their primary vaccination series.
  - **J&J COVID-19 vaccine** recipients 18 years of age and older may receive a single booster dose of J&J, Moderna (half dose), or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least two months after receiving their J&J COVID-19 vaccine primary vaccination series.
- The recommendations by the CDC allows mix and match dosing for booster shots. While the CDC recommends booster dose of any available COVID-19 vaccine, it is encouraged that people receive the same vaccine where possible.

## 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 mentioned on page 1. 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.

## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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:
  - Bring your COVID-19 vaccination card.
  - Take it easy the night before to ensure potential symptoms are not a result of other unrelated activities.
  - Anticipate the COVID-19 vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, feeling tired, or mild fever.
  - 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.
  - 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 an easily accessible proof of vaccination resource.

\*A person’s assessment of risk exposure may include, but is not limited to:

- *Those who work with the public or live with someone who works with the public*
- *Live or work with someone at high risk of severe impact of COVID-19*
- *Live in geographic areas that have been heavily impacted by COVID-19*
- *Reside in high transmission areas*
- *Live in a congregate setting*
- *Experience social inequity, or*
- *Other risk conditions as assessed by the individual.*

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, please visit:

**[coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine](https://coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine)**

