



**To: CAHAN San Diego Participants**

**Date: August 19, 2021**

**From: Public Health Services**

**Health Advisory Update #39: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Vaccine Update**

#### **Key Messages**

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an additional mRNA COVID-19 vaccine dose for moderately and severely immunocompromised people after an initial 2-dose primary mRNA vaccine series.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is still evaluating data on the effectiveness of an additional dose for immunocompromised individuals for those that received the single dose Janssen (Johnson and Johnson) vaccine.
- Other fully vaccinated persons do not need an additional dose nor a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, at this time. A decision regarding a booster dose for non-immunocompromised individuals, who are fully vaccinated, may be announced by the CDC in the near future.
- Fully vaccinated immunosuppressed individuals should consult with their primary care provider when obtaining an additional vaccine dose.
- The CDC does not recommend serologic testing to assess response to vaccine in the fully vaccinated or to determine the need for an additional vaccine dose.

#### **Situation**

On August 12, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended the EUAs for the [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#) vaccines to allow an additional dose for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. Subsequently CDC's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) and the [Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup](#) released recommendations for the additional dose of mRNA vaccines in moderately to severely immunocompromised individuals. For public health purposes, the CDC states that immunocompromised persons are still considered fully vaccinated  $\geq 2$  weeks after completing a primary vaccine series (i.e., 2-dose Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series or a single dose of the Janssen vaccine). The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is still evaluating data on the effectiveness of Janssen (Johnson and Johnson) vaccine for immunocompromised individuals. Therefore, an additional dose of vaccine for immunocompromised individuals that received their initial vaccination with the Janssen vaccine is not recommended, at this time.

The CDC has updated COVID-19 vaccine clinical considerations to include a new section on [clinical considerations for use of COVID-19 vaccine dose for immunocompromised persons](#) and includes the following key points.

- Moderate to severe immune compromise due to a medical condition or receipt of immunosuppressive medications or treatments that should receive an additional dose of mRNA vaccine include but are not limited to:
  - Active treatment for solid tumor and hematologic malignancies.
  - Receipt of solid-organ transplant and taking immunosuppressive therapy.
  - Receipt of CAR-T-cell or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within 2 years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy).

- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids (i.e., ≥20mg prednisone or equivalent per day), alkylating agents, antimetabolites, transplant-related immunosuppressive drugs, cancer chemotherapeutic agents classified as severely immunosuppressive, tumor-necrosis (TNF) blockers, and other biologic agents that are immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory.
- The age of immune compromised individuals eligible to receive the additional dose is unchanged: Pfizer-BioNTech, aged ≥12 years, and Moderna, aged ≥18 years.
- The additional dose should be administered at least 28 days after the completion of the initial mRNA COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Ideally, individuals should be vaccinated with the same vaccine as they received during their first and second dose, but if that is not possible receiving a third dose with another mRNA vaccine is also acceptable.
- Utility of serologic testing or cellular immune testing, to assess immune response to vaccination and guide clinical care (e.g., need for an additional dose), has not been established and is **not recommended** by CDC, at this time.

CDC hosted a Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) [webinar](#) for healthcare providers on the ACIP recommendations on August 17, 2021. A recording and the slides are available [here](#). An [MMWR](#) with the recommendations is expected early next week.

### **Actions Requested**

1. Communicate with your immunocompromised patients about the recommendation of an additional mRNA vaccine dose.
2. Refer your immunocompromised patients to any vaccine site that offers Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, if your facility is not a COVID-19 vaccine provider.
3. Schedule appointments through [MyCAvax.cdph.ca.gov](https://mycavax.cdph.ca.gov), beginning August 18 for appointments on August 19, 2021. Patients do not need a doctor's note and may self-attest that they have a qualifying medical condition. Self-attestation forms are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
4. Discuss with your immunocompromised patients about the importance of continuing to follow other precautions, such as wearing a mask, maintaining physical distance from those that are not a part of their household, avoiding crowds, and avoiding poorly ventilated spaces.
5. Encourage household members and other close contacts of immune compromised individual to also get fully vaccinated for COVID-19.
6. Do not use serologic or cellular immune testing to assess immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines, as the utility of these tests has not been evaluated in clinical practice. Hence, the use of these tests for this purpose is not recommended.

### **Resources**

#### *For Healthcare Providers*

- CDC: [Considerations for use of an additional mRNA COVID-19 vaccine dose for immunocompromised persons](#)
- CDPH: [Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Doses for People Whose Immune Systems are Compromised \(ca.gov\)](#)
- SDC: [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources and Guidance \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](#)
- ACIP: [ACIP Altered Immunocompetence Guidelines for Immunizations](#)
- CDC: [Yellow Book-Immunocompromised Travelers](#)
- IDSA: [Clinical Practice Guideline for Vaccination of the Immunocompromised Host](#)

*For Patients*

- SDC: [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources & Links \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](#)
- CDPH: [Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Doses for People Whose Immune Systems are Compromised](#)
- CDC: [COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately to Severely Immunocompromised People](#)

Thank you for your participation.

**CAHAN San Diego**

County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch

Phone: (619) 692-8499; Fax: (858) 715-6458

Urgent Phone for pm/weekends/holidays: (858) 565-5255

E-mail: [cahan@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:cahan@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Secure Website: <http://cahan.ca.gov>

Public Website: <http://www.cahansandiego.com>