

Recommendations Regarding COVID-19
Vaccine Booster Dose



DATE:	10/25/2021
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Alison V. Beam, JD, Acting Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Recommendations regarding COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Dose
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
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This transmission is a “Health Advisory,” and provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL; **EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE **LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP; **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

SUMMARY

- CDC [Guidance](#) released on October 21, 2021 recommends that patients who received the primary series of any of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines **may** be eligible for a booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- The booster dose for the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna) should occur 6 months or more after the initial series is complete and is only recommended for adults aged 18 and older who meet **certain population criteria**.
- The booster dose for the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine should occur 2 months or more after the vaccine and is for **all** adults 18 and older who received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine as their initial vaccine.
- The booster dose for the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine and the Johnson and Johnson vaccines is the same as the original dose whereas the booster dose for the Moderna vaccine is **half** the original dose.
- Heterologous (Mix and Match) dosing can be considered for the booster.
- Recommendations regarding providing additional doses to moderately to severely immunocompromised people can be found in [PA HAN 587](#).
- If you have any questions, please call PA DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) or your local health department.

Background

On October 21, 2021 the CDC reviewed the current data about the continuing effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines and [recommended](#) a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccines for certain populations. This booster dose can be from the same product as the original series or from a different authorized COVID-19 vaccine product.

Recommendations

- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine:
 - People in the following populations who received their primary series with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for a booster dose:
 - People aged 65 and over
 - Residents of [long-term care facilities](#) who are 18 years of age and older
 - People 18 years of age and over with the following [underlying medical conditions](#):
 - Cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic lung disease, dementia or other neurological conditions, diabetes mellitus (type 1 and 2), down syndrome, heart conditions, HIV infection, immunocompromised state, mental health conditions, overweight and obesity, pregnancy and recent pregnancy, sickle cell disease or thalassemia, smoker, solid organ or blood stem cell transplant, stroke or cerebrovascular disease, substance use disorders, tuberculosis
 - People 18 years of age and over who are at increased risk to COVID-19 exposure and transmission due to [occupational or institutional setting](#)
 - Examples include: Healthcare workers, first responders, teachers, food and agricultural workers, manufacturing workers, corrections workers, US Postal Service workers, public transit workers, and grocery store workers
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose should be given 6 months or later after completion of the primary series
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose is the same as the primary series dose: 0.3ml via intramuscular injection
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose may be given in conjunction with other vaccines without regard to timing including on the same day
 - [Contraindications](#) for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster dose are as follows:
 - Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) after a previous dose or to a component of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine
 - Immediate allergic reaction of any severity to a previous dose or known allergy to a component of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine
 - Myocarditis after a dose of an mRNA vaccine is not an absolute contraindication; however, the booster dose should be deferred until myocarditis has completely resolved
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID -19 vaccine booster dose is **not** authorized for anyone under the age of 18 regardless of medical condition or occupation
- Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine:
 - People in the following populations who received their primary series with the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for a booster dose:
 - People aged 65 and over
 - Residents of [long-term care facilities](#) who are 18 years of age and older
 - People 18 years of age and older with the following [underlying medical conditions](#):
 - Cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic lung disease, dementia or other neurological conditions, diabetes mellitus (type 1 and 2), down syndrome, heart conditions, HIV infection, immunocompromised state, mental health conditions, overweight and obesity, pregnancy and recent pregnancy, sickle cell disease or thalassemia, smoker, solid organ or blood

stem cell transplant, stroke or cerebrovascular disease, substance use disorders, tuberculosis

- People 18 years of age and older who are at increased risk to COVID-19 exposure and transmission due to [occupational or institutional setting](#)
 - Examples include: Healthcare workers, first responders, teachers, food and agricultural workers, manufacturing workers, corrections workers, US Postal Service workers, public transit workers, and grocery store workers
- The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster dose should be given 6 months or later after completion of the primary series
- The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster dose is **half** of the dose as the primary series dose: 0.25ml via intramuscular injection
- The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster dose may be given in conjunction with other vaccines without regard to timing including on the same day
- [Contraindications](#) for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster dose are as follows:
 - Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) after a previous dose or to a component of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine
 - Immediate allergic reaction of any severity to a previous dose or known allergy to a component of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine
- Myocarditis after a dose of an mRNA vaccine is not an absolute contraindication; however, the booster dose should be deferred until myocarditis has completely resolved
- The Moderna COVID -19 vaccine booster dose is **not** authorized for anyone under the age of 18 regardless of medical condition or occupation
- Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine:
 - The booster dose of the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine **should** be given to anyone 18 years and older who received the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine as their primary COVID-19 vaccine
 - The Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine booster dose should be given 2 months or later after the primary vaccine.
 - The Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine booster dose is the same as the primary series dose: 0.5ml via intramuscular injection
 - The Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine booster dose may be given in conjunction with other vaccines without regard to timing including on the same day
 - [Contraindications](#) for the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine booster dose are as follows:
 - Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) after a previous dose or to a component of the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine
 - Immediate allergic reaction of any severity to a previous dose or known allergy to a component of the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine
 - Known polysorbate allergy
 - If a patient developed Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS) after the first dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine a booster dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine is contraindicated.
 - These individuals may receive a booster dose of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months following the Johnson and Johnson dose and after the clinical condition has stabilized.
 - If a patient has a risk for Guillan Barre syndrome (GBS), providers should discuss the increased risk for GBS with the Johnson and Johnson vaccine and whether booster vaccination with an mRNA vaccine is preferable.
 - The Johnson and Johnson COVID -19 vaccine booster dose is **not** authorized for anyone under the age of 18 regardless of medical condition or occupation

- Heterologous (Mix and Match) Dosing:

- Heterologous (mix and match) dosing may occur for the booster dose. In other words, a different COVID-19 vaccine product from the original vaccination series can be used for the booster dose.
- The determination of whether to use a different product from the original series is decided between the provider and the patient.
- If Moderna is used as the booster dose, the Moderna booster dose and volume should be used (0.25ml).
- If using heterologous dosing for the booster dose, the timing of the booster dose is determined by the vaccine used in the primary series. If Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines were used for the primary series then the interval to the booster dose is 6 months. If the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine was the primary vaccine then the interval to the booster dose is 2 months. See table below.

Vaccine Product used for Primary Series	Minimum Interval from Primary Series completion to Booster Dose	Booster Product
Pfizer	6 months	Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson
Moderna	6 months	Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson
Johnson and Johnson	2 months	Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson

- Anyone who has completed their primary series of COVID-19 vaccination is considered fully vaccinated, regardless of whether they have received the booster dose
- Recommendations regarding providing additional doses to moderately to severely immunocompromised people can be found in [PA HAN 587](#).

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Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of October 25, 2021 but may be modified in the future.