

COVID-19 Vaccines Boosters: What you need to know



Vaccines save lives.

Get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19, and encourage your loved ones to do the same.

Find vaccine near you at vaccines.gov

Are the boosters free?



COVID vaccines and boosters are provided free of charge.

Why are boosters needed?



Studies show that after getting vaccinated against COVID-19, protection against the virus may decrease over time. Booster shots increase immune response and could improve continued protection against COVID-19, including new variants.

For everyone age 12 years and over, a booster dose of vaccine is recommended for continued protection:

Get a booster if you received your initial Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series at least 5 months ago.

Get a booster if you received the Johnson & Johnson single dose vaccine at least 2 months ago.

Which vaccine should you get for a booster?



People age 18 years and older may choose which COVID-19 vaccine to receive as a booster shot. For people ages 12–17 years, only Pfizer vaccine can be used for the booster.

An mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) is preferred for booster vaccination.

What should I expect when I get my booster?



Bring your COVID-19 Vaccination Record card to your booster shot appointment so information about your booster dose can be added to it. If forget your card, your provider can help you.

You may experience side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. These are normal signs that your body is building protection against COVID-19. Some people do not feel any side effects.

Possible side effects are pain, redness or swelling on the arm where you get your shot, and temporary tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever or nausea. Side effects should go away within a few days. Call your healthcare provider with any questions.

Do I need the vaccine or a booster if I've already had COVID-19?



Yes. You can get COVID-19 more than once, so it's important to get vaccinated and get a booster if you are eligible.

Will I need to get a booster every six months?



Many other vaccines require booster doses or annual shots. The COVID-19 virus is new, so we don't yet know whether another booster will be needed for protection in the future.

Where do I get the vaccine or booster?



Most local pharmacies offer free vaccine. Visit vaccines.gov to find a convenient location near you.