



Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters Fact Sheet September 13, 2022

What are the new COVID-19 vaccine boosters?

The new or updated boosters are bivalent vaccines that target both the original coronavirus strain as well as the Omicron variants (BA.4 and BA.5). Omicron variants are now the most dominant and transmissible COVID-19 strains in the country. By updating the vaccine composition to target the Omicron variants, the boosters provide protection against new variants as well as restore protection that has declined since previous vaccination.¹

Is it safe and effective?

The FDA authorized the updated boosters from both Pfizer and Moderna on August 31, 2022. The authorization, which means the boosters meet the FDA's rigorous safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality standards, required a review of extensive safety and immune response data obtained from a clinical study of a bivalent COVID-19 vaccine. Like the other previously authorized COVID-19 vaccines, the updated boosters will protect against serious illness from COVID-19. Individuals who receive a bivalent COVID-19 vaccine may experience side effects commonly reported from the previous COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.² Serious side effects are rare.³

Who is eligible to receive the new booster?

Pfizer's updated booster shot is recommended for individuals 12 and older, and Moderna's updated booster shot is recommended for adults 18 and older. Individuals are eligible for both vaccine boosters at least two months after they have completed primary COVID-19 vaccination or have received the most recent monovalent booster dose. The updated bivalent formula is only for COVID-19 booster doses, not for initial vaccination.⁴

¹ [CDC Recommends the First Updated COVID-19 Booster](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, released September 1, 2022.

² [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Authorizes Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccines for Use as a Booster Dose](#), Federal Drug Administration, released August 31, 2022.

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/safety-of-vaccines.html>

⁴ [COVID-19 Bivalent Vaccine Boosters](#), Federal and Drug Administration, updated August 31, 2022.

When should I get the updated booster?

For individuals that have received previous COVID vaccinations and boosters, some protection is lost as the virus changes and immunity naturally decreases over time. The CDC recommends that all individuals stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations to protect against severe illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. You are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines if you have completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series and received the most recent booster dose recommended for you by the CDC.⁵ The updated boosters are available now and vaccination sites with the updated boosters can be found at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). Staying up to date with vaccinations is particularly important for older individuals or those with medical conditions that put them at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19.⁶

Should I get the updated booster if I recently had COVID-19?

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from COVID-19 infection provides added protection. Individuals who have recently tested positive for COVID-19 should defer any COVID-19 vaccination, including booster vaccination, at least until recovery from the acute illness (if symptoms were present) and CDC criteria to discontinue isolation have been met.

For maximum effectiveness of the updated vaccine boosters, individuals who recently had COVID-19 may consider delaying any COVID-19 vaccination, including the updated booster dose, by 3 months from the start of their symptoms or positive test.⁷

Can I mix and match vaccines?

Eligible individuals can get either the Pfizer or Moderna updated booster, regardless of whether their primary series or most recent dose was with Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax or the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.⁸

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Updated September 8, 2022.

⁶ [People with Certain Medical Conditions](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Updated September 2, 2022.

⁷ [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved or Authorized in the United States](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Updated September 2, 2022.

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Updated September 8, 2022.