

## COVID-19 vaccine: Boosters

Ages 16+ are eligible for boosters. If you've had COVID-19 it's recommended you wait 3 months after testing positive before getting any COVID-19 vaccination.

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## Timings for a booster

If you're **aged 18 or over**, and you completed your primary vaccination course\* at least 3 months ago, you're eligible for a Pfizer or AstraZeneca booster. Novavax is available as a booster at least six months after completing the primary course of any COVID-19 vaccine used in New Zealand.

If you're **aged 16 or 17**, and you completed your primary vaccination course\* at least **6 months** ago, you're eligible for a booster. Only Pfizer is approved for this age group.

You can check when your last vaccination was by logging into [My Covid Record](http://mycovidrecord.health.nz/) (<http://mycovidrecord.health.nz/>).

\*For most people a primary course is two doses.

[Recommended timing gaps for different COVID-19 vaccines \(/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/recommended-timing-gaps-different-covid-19-vaccines\)](#)

## If you've had COVID-19 recently

If you've had COVID-19 it's recommended you wait 3 months after testing positive before getting any COVID-19 vaccination.

[Getting a COVID-19 vaccine if you've had COVID-19 \(/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/getting-covid-19-vaccine-if-youve-had-covid-19\)](#)

## Under 16s

People under the age of 16 are not eligible for a booster. However, you can discuss specific clinical circumstances with your GP or healthcare provider.

As with all medicines, vaccines can be used outside of Medsafe approval (this is called 'off label') if they are prescribed by an authorised prescriber. A GP can decide whether to provide a prescription after a conversation about the benefits and risks.

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## Second boosters

A second booster is recommended for those at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 – **a minimum of 6 months after a first booster**. For those who are not considered at risk of severe illness from COVID-19, a two-dose primary course and a first booster dose provides very good protection against severe illness from COVID-19 at this time.

### People recommended to receive a second booster as a priority

- **people aged 65 years and over**
- **Māori and Pacific peoples aged 50 years and over**
- **residents of aged care and disability care facilities**
- **severely immunocompromised people who received a three-dose primary course and a fourth dose as a first booster (noting this would be a fifth dose for these people)**

### Other people recommended to receive a second booster as a priority

- **people aged 16 years and over who have a medical condition that increases the risk of severe breakthrough COVID-19 illness and**
- **people aged 16 years and over who live with disability with significant or complex health needs or multiple comorbidities.**

See [Clinical criteria in support of second booster eligibility](https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/clinical-criteria-support-second-booster-eligibility) ([/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/clinical-criteria-support-second-booster-eligibility](https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/clinical-criteria-support-second-booster-eligibility)).

**In addition, a second booster is available for:**

- **all people aged 50 years and over**
- **health, aged care and disability workers aged 30 years and over.**

A second booster is not yet needed by younger people who are generally healthy and do not have underlying health conditions. This includes people who are currently healthy and pregnant.

If you are not considered at risk of severe illness from COVID-19, a two-dose primary course and a booster dose provides very good protection against severe illness from COVID-19.

You can book an appointment for a booster dose through [Book My Vaccine](https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/) (<https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/>), or by calling the COVID Vaccination Healthline on 0800 28 29 26 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week).

The Pfizer vaccine remains the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for use in New Zealand, reflecting its excellent safety and effectiveness profile. For adults aged 18 and above who wish to have a different COVID-19 vaccine option, AstraZeneca and Novavax are available as a second booster at least six months after the first booster.

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## Why get a booster?

After a few months, your protection against the COVID-19 virus starts to drop away, and it's particularly important that you have the booster dose to protect you against this new Omicron variant.

Two doses was good for Delta, but Omicron needs three.

Boosters lower your chances of getting very sick from COVID-19 and ending up in hospital.

# Hear from experts

Transcript ▾

Dr Ashley Bloomfield explains that with Omicron in the community, getting a COVID-19 booster is the best thing you can do to protect you and your whānau.

Transcript ▾

Dr Lily Fraser, Dr Siouxsie Wiles, Dr Api Talemaitoga, and Dr Anthony Jordan answer your questions about the COVID-19 booster.

# How to get a booster

You can get a booster dose the same way you got your previous COVID-19 vaccinations – including walk-in sites and drive-throughs.

You can book an appointment for a booster dose through [Book My Vaccine](https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/) (https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/) or by calling the COVID Vaccination Healthline on [0800 28 29 26](tel:0800282926) (tel:0800 28 29 26) (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week).

[Recommended timing gaps for different COVID-19 vaccines](#) (/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/recommended-timing-gaps-different-covid-19-vaccines)

# Proof of your booster

When you do get any COVID-19 vaccination, it will be added to My Covid Record. You can then download another International Vaccination Certificate, vaccination record, or My Vaccine Pass.

[My Covid Record](#) (/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/my-covid-record-proof-vaccination-status)

# My Vaccine Pass from June 1st

An updated My Vaccine Pass is available for anyone aged 12 and over who is up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccinations, as well as those with a temporary medical exemption.

Age	Doses needed to get an updated My Vaccine Pass
18 years and over	2 primary doses, plus a booster
12 to 17-year-olds	2 primary doses
5 to 11-year-olds	Vaccine passes not needed, and not available for this age group

[My Vaccine Pass](https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/vaccine-passes-and-certificates/proof-of-your-vaccination-status/#about-my-vaccine-pass) (https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/vaccine-passes-and-certificates/proof-of-your-vaccination-status/#about-my-vaccine-pass)

# What being 'up-to-date' with your vaccinations means

A person is 'up-to-date' with their vaccinations if they have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccinations, including any booster dose(s) if and when eligible, according to their age and other factors.

# Side effects of boosters

You may experience some side effects, similar to those you might've had after the first or second dose, such as muscle aches, pain at the injection site, or headaches.

For most people these are mild effects. They are a sign your body's immune system is learning to fight the virus. They don't last long and for many people do not impact on day-to-day activities.

[Rare side effects of the Pfizer vaccine](#) (/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-pfizer-vaccine-side-effects-and-reactions)

## Text invites to submit side effects

If you have a booster, you may be invited by text to let us know about any side effects experienced – this is called a 'Post Vaccine Symptom Check'.

The text invite will come from the Ministry of Health and you'll be asked to reply 'YES', 'NO', or 'STOP'. All replies are free of charge.

If you want to take part you'll be sent a link to an online web form.