



# COVID-19 Vaccines - Frequently Asked Questions FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE IMMUNOCOMPROMISED



## Why do people with weak immune systems have different vaccine recommendations?

People with [moderately or severely weakened immune systems](#) (e.g., blood-related cancers or certain treatments for cancer, organ transplants, and certain autoimmune conditions) are especially vulnerable to COVID-19. They are more likely to get COVID-19 than people with normal immune systems. And if they get infected, they are more likely to get very ill and also to spread the virus to others.

In addition, some people with weak immune systems don't build enough protection from the standard COVID-19 primary series.

For these reasons, people with moderately or severely weakened immune systems have different vaccine recommendations to help increase their protection. In addition, a medicine to help prevent COVID-19 infection called [Evusheld](#) is also recommended for many moderately or severely immunocompromised people (see below).

## How many doses should I get?

It depends on your age and your COVID-19 vaccine primary series.

### Primary series

- **If your primary series is with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine**, you should get 3 doses
- **If your primary series starts with a J&J vaccine**, you should get 1 dose of the J&J vaccine plus a dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine
- **If your primary series is with the Novavax vaccine**, you should get 2 doses

### Booster doses

- **People ages 5 years or older** - you should get one fall (updated) bivalent booster\* at least 2 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine dose (either the final primary series dose or the last booster). This is regardless of how many boosters or which type of vaccine(s) you got in the past.
  - People age 6 and older get either the Pfizer or Moderna fall booster.
  - Children age 5 can only get the Pfizer fall booster

\*If you are age 18 and older, you can choose to get a Novavax (monovalent) vaccine instead of an mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) bivalent booster if you meet **all** of the following criteria: you are unable or unwilling to receive an mRNA booster **AND** you have completed your primary series vaccination **AND** you have never had any COVID-19 booster before.

- **Children age 6 months through 4 years — There are no booster doses authorized for this age group.**

Visit the interactive [Find Out When to Get a Booster](#) tool on the CDC [Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters](#) webpage to find out when you (or your child) are due for vaccines.

**Ask your doctor about the best timing of your vaccine doses based on your current treatment plan. This is especially important if you are about to start or restart immunosuppressive treatment.**

See the DPH [COVID-19 Vaccine Schedule](#) at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidvaccineschedules](https://ph.lacounty.gov/covidvaccineschedules) for information on all recommended primary and booster doses for people who are immunocompromised.





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## What other steps should I take to protect myself?

It is important to take other steps to protect yourself from COVID-19 in addition to getting the COVID-19 vaccine:

- **Talk to your doctor about medicine to prevent COVID-19.** A medicine called Evusheld is now available to prevent COVID-19 infection in people who can't build enough protection from the vaccine alone. It is given as 2 separate injections into the buttocks during a single visit. It is given every 6 months to people age 12 and over who weigh at least 88 pounds. For more information, see the FDA Patient/Parent [Evusheld Fact Sheet](#).
- **Wear a protective mask** such as a well-fitting respirator (e.g., N95, KN95, KF94) or a [double mask](#) for a higher level of protection. Avoid crowded indoor places or spaces with poor airflow when possible. For details, see [ph.lacounty.gov/reducerisk](https://ph.lacounty.gov/reducerisk) and [ph.lacounty.gov/masks](https://ph.lacounty.gov/masks).
- **Encourage the people that you spend time with to help protect you.** They should stay [up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccines including their fall booster (if age 5+), and take other steps to [reduce their risk](#) of getting and passing COVID-19 to you.

## Where can I get more information?



- To print or view this FAQ or FAQs on other COVID-19 vaccine topics, scan the QR code or visit [COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#).
- [VaccinateLACounty.com](https://vaccinate.lacounty.gov) – including [COVID-19 Vaccine Schedules](#) with graphics to show when each dose is due and information on [How to Get Vaccinated](#).
- See the CDC webpage [COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately or Severely Immunocompromised People](#) to learn more.
- Talk to your doctor if you have questions.

