



# Your COVID-19 boosters in pregnancy

Version 2

16 September 2022

This is a large print leaflet. The leaflet will be updated as new information becomes available. For a printed copy of the most recent version, contact NCBI by emailing **[library@ncbi.ie](mailto:library@ncbi.ie)**

# Why should I get my next COVID-19 vaccine?

It is important to keep up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccines, even if you are already vaccinated or you have had COVID-19.

This is because:

- the protection you got from your previous vaccines or the protection you got from a COVID-19 infection may weaken over time
- you may be at higher risk of severe disease if you get COVID-19

COVID-19 is a risk to your health and the health of your baby. Most people who get COVID-19 when pregnant have mild to moderate symptoms. However, you're more likely to get very unwell and need treatment in intensive care than those who are not pregnant. The virus may also cause complications for your baby, including premature labour or stillbirth.

Children under the age of 1 are at higher risk of hospitalisation and severe illness from COVID-19. Young babies whose mothers were vaccinated in pregnancy, were less likely to need hospital care with COVID-19.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy gives you – and your baby – the best possible protection from COVID-19.

## **How many COVID-19 vaccine doses do I need?**

If you've already had a first round – usually 2 doses – and a single booster dose before you became pregnant, you can get your second booster at or after 16 weeks of your pregnancy – at least 4 months after your first booster.

If you received your first booster in your current pregnancy, then a second booster dose is not needed.

If you have not already had these vaccinations, you can get your first round of COVID-19 vaccines or first booster at any stage of pregnancy.

## **When should I get a booster?**

You should get your booster at least 4 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine. If you have had COVID-19 you should wait at least 4 months before getting your booster.

## **Which vaccine will I be offered for my booster?**

Three adapted mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have been recommended as booster doses by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee – NIAC in Ireland, following approval by the European Medicines Agency – EMA.

These vaccines are:

- Comirnaty BA.1 – Pfizer vaccine
- Comirnaty BA.4-5 – Pfizer vaccine
- Spikevax BA.1 – Moderna vaccine

The adapted vaccines can be given in pregnancy. While all previous vaccines offer protection against COVID-19, the adapted vaccines are expected to give wider protection against COVID-19 variants.

## **What do we know about the safety of boosters?**

We have less information on the safety of the second and subsequent COVID-19 boosters. However, many countries have given their populations multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

Studies show that there have not been any unexpected safety concerns so far for people who have received multiple boosters.

It is expected that the safety of the adapted vaccines will be similar to the previous vaccines. Safety of the vaccines will continue to be monitored by the EMA.

All the adapted vaccines contain Trometamol and so you cannot have these if you have had anaphylaxis – severe allergic reaction – to Trometamol.

## **Are booster vaccines licensed by the European Medicines Agency – EMA?**

Second or subsequent boosters of mRNA vaccines have not been approved by the EMA.

NIAC recommendations can vary from EMA recommendations due to local data and considerations. In Ireland we follow NIAC advice.

## Can I get my COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes. If you are due to get a flu or pertussis – whooping cough – vaccine, you can get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.

The pertussis – whooping cough – vaccine is recommended between 16 and 36 weeks of pregnancy and is available throughout the year, usually from your GP.

### Further information

For more information on COVID-19 boosters, visit [hse.ie/covid19vaccine](https://www.hse.ie/covid19vaccine).

You can also talk to a healthcare professional, like your GP – Nurse – Pharmacist – or Vaccinator about the vaccine.

**Published by HSE on 16 September 2022**

For the most up-to-date information visit [www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie)