

# Your COVID-19 boosters

for people age 50 and over  
and between 16 and 49 with  
a health condition or weak  
immune system



**COVID-19  
VACCINE**  
Public Health  
Advice

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## This information is for people who are:

- 50 years or older
- aged 16 to 49 with a health condition that puts them at high risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19 (including people who have a weak immune system) or live in a long-term care facility

## Why should I get another 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

Boosters increase your protection from COVID-19. Without it, you're more at risk of serious illness if you do get COVID-19.

## How many COVID-19 vaccine doses should I have received?

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) has recommended that:

- you should have received your first round of COVID-19 vaccines (usually 2 doses except for people who received the single dose Janssen COVID-19 vaccine). If you are immunocompromised (weak immune system), you should have had an additional dose as part of your primary course
- you should then receive your first booster dose
- this should be followed by a second booster dose
- if you are aged 65 years and over or are immunocompromised (weak immune system), you can now receive a third booster dose
- if are aged 16 to 64 with an underlying health condition, and you did not receive an adapted COVID-19 vaccine, you can get a third booster which will be an adapted vaccine. You will find information about adapted vaccines on the next page.

## 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 after your symptoms started or after you tested positive 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)

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. However, the EMA and the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) have issued advice that a second booster of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine can be given to those aged 60 or over and for people with health conditions that put them at high risk of disease as a second booster will give them better protection.

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 my flu vaccine?

Yes. If you are due to get a flu vaccine, you can get any COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.

## Further information

You can read more on [hse.ie/covid19vaccine](https://www.hse.ie/covid19vaccine) or call our team in HSELive on **1800 700 700**. They're open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

You can also talk to your GP, nurse, pharmacist or vaccinator.

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