

Information on your second booster



**COVID-19
VACCINE**
Public Health
Advice

Who should get a second booster vaccine?

If you are:

- 65 years or older, or
- 12 years and over with a weak immune system

the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) is recommending a second COVID-19 vaccine booster for you.

Why should I get a second booster?

You may be more at risk of serious illness from COVID-19, even if you are already vaccinated, because:

- the protection from the vaccines you got already may weaken with time
- you may be more at higher risk of severe disease
- your immune system does not respond as strongly to vaccination

Information from other countries shows that a second booster gives you extra protection from COVID-19 and helps prevent you developing serious illness if you do get COVID-19.

Which vaccine can I get as a second booster?

If you are 30 years or older we are offering you a single dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. If you are 29 years or younger we will offer you a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine. These are mRNA vaccines. You can have these vaccines even if you had a different vaccine before.

You may get a non-mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, like Novavax, if an mRNA vaccine is not suitable or you choose not to have an mRNA vaccine. We will give you detailed information on the vaccines that you get. You can also find it on hse.ie/covid19vaccine.

When should I get a second booster?

You can get a second booster when you have had:

- your first round of COVID-19 vaccines (usually 2 doses)
- an additional dose (only if you have a weak immune system) and
- your first booster

You should get a second booster at least four months after your first booster. For most people, this would be your fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine. If you have a weak immune system this would be your fifth dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have had COVID-19 since your first booster, wait at least four months before you get a second booster.

What do we know about the safety of a second booster?

We have less information on the safety of the second COVID-19 booster. The UK, Israel, Denmark and some other countries are giving a second booster to certain people. Studies show that there have not been any unexpected safety concerns so far for people who have received their first and second booster.

Myocarditis and pericarditis are inflammatory heart conditions and are very rare risks of mRNA vaccines. These rare side effects are more common in men under the age of 30 years after their second primary vaccine dose. The risk of these side effects appears to be lower after the first booster.

Is the second booster dose of vaccine licensed by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)?

Second 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 80 and over because they are at high risk of severe disease and 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.

Further information

You can read more about the vaccines on [hse.ie/covid19vaccine](https://www.hse.ie/covid19vaccine).

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

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