



## Booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine

The protection from previous doses or a COVID-19 infection may weaken over time. Booster doses help boost your antibodies and give you good protection from becoming seriously ill or needing to go to hospital if you get COVID-19.

A first booster is recommended for all adults age 18 years and older.

After this, seasonal boosters are recommended for some people at higher risk of COVID-19 illness.

### Who can get an autumn booster

Autumn booster doses are available now.

You will be offered a booster dose if you are:

- age 50 or older
- age 5 or older with a weak immune system (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/#weak-immune-system-list>)
- age 5 to 49 with a condition that puts you at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/people-at-higher-risk/overview/#conditions-that-put-you-at-higher-risk>)
- a healthcare worker (Link: <https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/covid-19-staff-support/healthcare-worker-vaccines/>)

Read about booster doses needed during pregnancy (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/pregnancy/#booster-doses-while-pregnant>).

If you're age 18 to 49 and not in one of the groups above, you can still request a vaccine. Talk to your GP or pharmacist about your reasons for wanting a booster.

You can get your COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine at the same time (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-booster-dose/#covid-19-booster-and-flu-vaccine>).

### How long to wait

You have to leave some time between your booster and your last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

How long to wait depends on your age, if you are pregnant or if you have a weak immune system (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/>).

#### ▼ If you are 50 or older

It is recommended to wait 6 months since your last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

But you can get your booster at least 3 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine or infection if you need protection sooner.

Talk to your GP or pharmacist for advice.

#### ▼ If you are age 5 to 49

It is recommended to wait 9 months since your last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

But you can get your booster at least 3 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine or infection if you need protection sooner.

Talk to your GP or pharmacist for advice.

There is different advice if you are:

- 5 or older with a weak immune system - wait 6 months since your last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection

- pregnant - read about how long to wait between vaccines if you are pregnant (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/pregnancy/#booster-doses-while-pregnant>)

## How to get a booster dose

If you're age 12 or older, you can:

- go to a participating pharmacy (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/pharmacies-covid-19/>)
- go to your GP if they are offering COVID-19 vaccination

Freephone HSELive on 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>) to find out where is offering vaccines near you.

Which vaccine you will be offered (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-booster-dose/#which-vaccine-you-will-be-offered>)

## Children age 5 to 11

Children under 12 must go to a vaccination centre for their vaccine.

How to get a COVID-19 vaccine for children (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/children/#how-to-get-your-child-vaccinated>)

## First booster dose

Some people have not had their first booster dose.

At least one booster is:

- recommended for people age 18 and older
- available to people age 12 and older

Wait 4 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

For some people who need protection sooner, you can get your first booster 3 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine or infection.

People under 16 must attend their booster appointment with a parent or guardian. A parent or guardian will need to give consent for their child's vaccination (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/children/#giving-consent-for-vaccination>).

## Which vaccine you will be offered

You will be offered an adapted Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine as a booster dose. This is an mRNA vaccine.

Adapted vaccines work in the same way as the original Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines. But they are expected to give even more protection against COVID-19 variants, including Omicron variants.

You may get a non-mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, if an mRNA vaccine is not suitable, or you choose not to have an mRNA vaccine.

Read more about COVID-19 vaccine types (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/vaccine-types/>).

## COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine

You can get your COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/flu/vaccine/>) at the same time.

You may experience an increase in side effects after getting both vaccines together. These will be mild and should not last long.

Side effects may include:

- pain in your arm (or arms) where you had the vaccines
- fatigue (feeling tired)
- headache
- muscle aches and pain

If you feel uncomfortable, take paracetamol or ibuprofen following the instructions on the box or leaflet.



Find a pharmacy giving flu and COVID-19 vaccines (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/pharmacies-flu-and-covid-vaccines/>)

## Booster dose safety

Many countries have given multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines. There have not been any unexpected safety concerns so far. The safety of the vaccines continues to be monitored by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The side effects of the adapted Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines are similar to the original vaccines. The most regularly reported side effects are headache, fever, and tiredness.

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.

Read more about COVID-19 vaccine side effects (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/side-effects/#side-effects-of-covid-19-vaccines>)

If you have had anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) to trometamol, you should not get an adapted vaccine.

If you have any concerns about getting a booster, talk to your GP, nurse, pharmacist or vaccinator.

## After your COVID-19 booster dose

You need to wait for 15 minutes after the vaccine. This is to make sure that you feel well before you leave.

If you have had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) in the past, you'll need to wait 30 minutes.

Get medical care immediately if you:

- have difficulty breathing
- feel dizzy
- have a fast heartbeat or a skin rash

These could be a sign of an allergic reaction. But severe allergic reactions are rare.

## If you were vaccinated in a different country

If you were vaccinated abroad, you can get your booster here if you are due one.

You will need your vaccination details including vaccine type, date given and expiry date.

### ▼ If you do not have a PPS number

If you do not have a PPS number, you can still get vaccinated. You will need to bring photo ID and proof of address.

Your proof of address can be a:

- household bill in your name
- bank or financial institution statement
- letter from a public service department or agency
- rental agreement
- letter from the owner of the property to confirm you live there - this can be your parent
- bill or letter from a hotel or Airbnb

Phone HSELive on 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>) to find out where you can get your vaccine.

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## More in [Getting your COVID-19 vaccine \(Link: /screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/\)](/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/)

### Where to get vaccinated

About COVID-19 vaccination (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/about-covid-19-vaccination/>)

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Find a pharmacy giving COVID-19 vaccines (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/pharmacies-covid-19/>)

## **Children**

How to get a COVID-19 vaccine for children (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/children/>)

Deciding on COVID-19 vaccination for children (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccination-for-children/>)

Walk-in clinics for children (Link: </services/covid-19-vaccination-centres/>)

## **Weak immune system**

Weak immune system and COVID-19 vaccines (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/>)

## **Pregnancy and breastfeeding**

Pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility: COVID-19 vaccination (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/pregnancy/>)