

# COVID-19 vaccine: information on booster doses and third doses for severely immunocompromised individuals

A booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you from the virus.

You are recommended to have a booster dose after you have received 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccination.

Being fully vaccinated helps to keep yourself, your family, Elders and community safe.

It also helps you to get back to seeing the people you haven't been able to see, and doing the things you've missed doing.

## Information about COVID-19 booster doses

COVID-19 booster doses are now available. For the most recent recommended time frames for your booster, please speak with your GP or Aboriginal health service. You can also visit: [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated).

### Why should I get a COVID-19 booster dose?

A COVID-19 booster dose helps prevent waning immunity (loss of protection) against COVID-19.

A booster dose after your first 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine will make sure the protection from your previous doses are even stronger and longer lasting, and should help prevent spread of the virus.

The more people who get fully vaccinated, the less COVID-19 can spread. And with enough of us vaccinated, we will have community immunity.

### What is community immunity?

Some people cannot have a vaccination for medical reasons, so they depend on those of us who can get vaccinated to do so. This limits the spread of the virus and helps keep them safe. This is what we call community immunity.

### Where can I get my COVID-19 booster dose?

It is recommended that you receive your booster dose as soon as you are eligible. For the most recent recommended time frames for your booster, please speak with your GP or Aboriginal health service. You can also visit: [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated).

You can contact your local Aboriginal health service or doctor to get your free vaccination, or call **1800 675 398**.

You can also find a service at a doctor's clinic or pharmacy using **Vaccine Clinic Finder** ([healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)).

To find other places where you can get your booster vaccination, visit **Coronavirus Victoria**: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-communities-and-covid-19-vaccines>.

### What vaccine will I get as my COVID-19 booster dose?

Most people will receive the Pfizer vaccine as their booster dose. You can get this booster dose regardless of which COVID-19 vaccine you received for your first two doses.

Some people may receive the AstraZeneca vaccine as their booster dose if they had a bad reaction from having a Pfizer vaccine as their first or second dose.

If you're not sure which booster dose is best for you, speak with your Aboriginal health service or doctor.

## Information about third primary doses for severely immunocompromised people

Third primary doses of the vaccine are different from booster doses. Third primary doses are given to people who have certain serious illnesses or conditions, especially people who are immune suppressed.

A third primary dose for these people is a good idea, as it helps them get the same level of protection against COVID-19 as other people.

If you are severely immunocompromised, you may need a third primary dose, and you can discuss this with your Aboriginal health service or doctor.

If you're not sure if you should get a third primary dose of the vaccine, speak with your Aboriginal health service or doctor.

### After your COVID-19 booster dose or third primary dose for severely immunocompromised people

You might have side effects. Side effects are normal, usually mild, and go after a day or two. You might not have any side effects at all, but if you do, they include:

- pain where you had the needle
- tiredness
- muscle aches
- fever or chills
- joint pain.

Serious side effects are very rare. Contact your local Aboriginal health service or doctor if you are worried, or if any side effects have not gone away after a few days. Call 000 if you have a serious reaction such as trouble breathing, chest pain, a fast heartbeat, a seizure (fit) or if you collapse.

### Fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding

- There's no evidence to show that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility in men or women.
- People who are pregnant or who are trying to become pregnant do not need to delay their second COVID-19 vaccine dose.
- You do not need to stop breastfeeding after vaccination. The protection you get from the vaccine can also be in your breast milk, so can help to protect your baby that way too.

### Stay COVIDSafe, even after your COVID-19 booster or third primary dose

Even after a booster dose or third primary dose, you still need to be COVIDSafe.

Remember, there's some people that cannot get vaccinated for some medical reasons, so staying COVIDSafe helps keep them safe.

To stay COVIDSafe:

- wash your hands with soap and water often, or use hand sanitiser when you can't wash your hands
- keep 1.5 metres distance from other people (physically distance)
- wear a face mask inside or when you can't physically distance
- cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow.

Get tested for COVID-19 if you:

- feel even a little unwell
- have been to an exposure site
- have been in close contact with someone who might have COVID-19.

Then, stay home until you receive a negative result.

Don't go to a vaccine appointment if you feel unwell or think you may have COVID-19.

### More information

For more info, you can call the Aboriginal COVID-19 Infoline on **1800 312 911**, or visit **Coronavirus Victoria**: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-communities-and-covid-19-vaccines>.