



# Your COVID-19 vaccination

Everything you need to know  
*about* BOOSTERS



## Getting a booster

If you are 18 years and older you will be able to get a booster dose the same way you got vaccinated with your primary course. For most people, a primary course is two doses, for some people a primary course could be three doses.

When you arrive for your booster, the date of your last dose will be checked in the booking system to ensure it has been at least six months since your last dose.

To book an appointment for your booster go to: **BookMyVaccine.nz**



You can also get a booster at a walk-in clinic, pharmacy or your GP.

If you're unable to book online, you can call the COVID-19 Vaccination Healthline on **0800 28 29 26** (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week). We'll make the booking for you and answer any questions. Interpretation services, and text, email and NZ Relay options for deaf and hearing impaired are available if you need them. There is also a specialist team for disabled people (**option 2** on the **0800 number**).

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## **Why I need a booster**

Fully vaccinated people remain well protected from being seriously ill if they get COVID-19.

Current evidence shows that after 6 months following a primary vaccination course, there is a reduction in protection against infection. Giving a 'top up' vaccine 6 months after a primary course helps boost your immunity against COVID-19. A primary course is two doses, for some people a primary course could be three doses.

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## **My Vaccine Pass**

You do not need to have a booster to be certified as 'fully vaccinated' for My Vaccine Pass or an International Travel Vaccination Certificate.

## **Workers under the Vaccine Order**

A booster is not required for workers under a vaccine order/mandate.

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## **What vaccine is being used for boosters**

The Pfizer vaccine is the preferred vaccine being used in New Zealand for boosters, regardless of what vaccine was used for earlier doses.

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## **Pregnancy**

Pregnant people who had their primary course of vaccine before they became pregnant can receive a booster dose at any stage of pregnancy (from 6 months after a primary course). If you have completed your primary course during pregnancy, we recommend having the booster after your baby is born. A full primary course offers good protection in pregnancy.

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## **Booster Safety**

Medsafe's experts only grant consent for a vaccine to be used in New Zealand/Aotearoa once they are satisfied it has passed required levels of safety and effectiveness. The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine booster has already been approved for use in the USA, Canada, UK and Australia. Medsafe will continue to monitor:

*Booster Safety continued.*

- the overall safety profile of the vaccine
- any reported reactions (the frequency, the severity, and any previously unknown reactions)
- the effectiveness of the vaccine overall and in certain groups

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## **Potential side effects of boosters**

Boosters use the same Pfizer vaccine that was used for the first two doses in New Zealand's vaccination rollout.

You may experience some side effects, like how it was after the second dose, such as muscle aches, pain at the injection site or headaches. For most people these are mild effects. They are a sign your body's immune system is learning to fight the virus. They don't last long and for many people do not impact on day-to-day activities.

There are some side effects that are more serious but very rare, like a severe allergic reaction or an inflammation of the heart (myocarditis). If you develop difficulty breathing, a racing heart, chest pain or feel faint immediately or in the days after the vaccine, you should seek medical attention.

**If you're unsure about your symptoms or if they get worse, call Healthline:  
Phone: 0800 358 5453**

If you're concerned about your safety, call **111**. Tell them you've had a COVID-19 vaccination so they can assess you properly.

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## Additional measures

Keep up with social distancing, face coverings, scanning, using your My Vaccine Pass and staying at home if you are sick.

