Recommendation for Pfizer COVID-19 Booster Shots

It is recommended that some people who got the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and who are at increased risk of COVID-19 exposure or severe COVID-19 illness get a booster shot, especially people age 65 and older. The booster shot can be given six months or more after the second vaccine dose.

What is a booster shot?
A booster shot is an additional dose of a vaccine for people who built protection from vaccination, but whose protection may have decreased over time.

Who can get a booster shot?
The following groups who received the Pfizer vaccine are eligible for a booster shot:
- People 65 or older
- People 18 to 64 who live in a nursing home or other long-term care facility
- People 18 to 64 who have an underlying medical condition that increases their risk for severe COVID-19
- People 18 to 64 who are at increased risk of COVID-19 exposure due to their job (for example, health care workers) or where they live or frequently visit (for example, a homeless shelter)

Why is a booster shot being recommended?
The Pfizer vaccine is still very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19. However, some studies show that protection against infection may start to decrease after about six months. A booster shot may provide extra protection to people who are at increased risk of COVID-19 exposure or severe COVID-19 illness, especially with the presence of the delta variant.

What about people who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine?
Experts are studying whether a booster shot should be recommended for people who got the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccine. We expect more information about this soon.

Which medical conditions increase the risk of severe COVID-19 illness?
Medical conditions that increase the risk of severe COVID-19 include diabetes, heart conditions, chronic kidney disease, chronic lung disease, liver disease, cancer, dementia, HIV and pregnancy. Visit cdc.gov and search for **medical conditions** for a complete list.

Who is at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 in their workplace or another setting?
Jobs that may increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19 include health care workers, teachers, day care staff, and restaurant and grocery store workers. Other settings where there may be increased risk of exposure include homeless shelters and prisons.

How do I know if I need a booster shot?
Talk to your health care provider if you have questions about whether you should get a booster shot. If you need help finding a provider, call **311**.

What are the risks of getting a booster shot?
For many people who have received two doses of the Pfizer vaccine, the benefits of getting a booster shot outweigh the risks. So far, reactions reported after getting a third shot were similar to those after the first two doses. Tiredness and arm soreness were the most commonly reported side effects. Most side effects were mild to moderate. Side effects are rare, but may occur after a booster shot.

Is the booster shot the same vaccine as the first two doses?
Yes. The Pfizer booster shot is the same vaccine as each of the first two doses.

When should I get a booster shot?
You should get a booster shot six months or more after you received your second dose.

I am immunocompromised and got a third vaccine dose. Should I get a booster shot?
No. There is no recommendation to receive a fourth dose at this time. For information about third doses for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, visit nyc.gov/health/covidvaccine and look for Third Dose for People Who Are Immunocompromised.

Where can I get a booster shot?
You can get a booster shot anywhere that offers the Pfizer vaccine. You do not need to go to the same place where you got your first two doses. To find a vaccination site, go to nyc.gov/vaccinefinder and choose "Pfizer" from the "Any vaccine" drop-down. You can also call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692) for help finding a City-run vaccination site. To schedule a free in-home vaccination, visit nyc.gov/homevaccine or call 877-829-4692.

Can I get a booster shot at the same time as other vaccines (such as the flu vaccine)?
Yes. You can get a booster shot at the same time as other vaccines, or any time before or after. If you have not yet gotten your flu shot, try to find a site that offers both vaccines, such as some pharmacies.

Is a booster shot free?
Yes, a booster shot is free for anyone who is eligible to get one. If you have insurance, it may be billed, but you will not be charged an administration fee or any other fee.

What documents do I need to show to get a booster shot?
You will need to show a document with your date of birth, such as a driver's license, non-driver ID, IDNYC, birth certificate, or passport. If you are between age 18 to 64, you will need to attest that you have a medical condition that allows you to get a booster shot or that you are at increased risk of COVID-19 exposure because of where you work, live or frequently visit. No other document is required.

Do I need a booster shot to be fully vaccinated?
No. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (such as Pfizer or Moderna) or two weeks after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.   9.24.21