



Health Advisory:

Current Guidance on Booster Doses for Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Recipients

October 5, 2021

FDA Recent Actions

([8/23/21](#)) Granted approval for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine as a 2-dose primary series in persons age 16 years and above.

Extended its Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for this vaccine, which now includes:

- ([5/11/21](#)) A 2-dose primary series in persons age 12 through 15 years
- ([8/12/21](#)) A 3rd primary series dose in persons age 12 years and older with moderate to severe immunosuppression (see [SFDPH health advisory 8/18/21](#))
- ([9/22/21](#)) A **single booster dose** in persons age 65 years and older, as well as in persons age 18 through 64 years who are at high risk of complicated or severe COVID-19 and/or who have frequent institutional or occupational exposure, at least 6 months after completing the Pfizer-BioNTech primary series (see [Fact Sheet](#))

CDC and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Recent Actions

Based on available data showing declines in mRNA COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness over time in certain populations, CDC recently published [interim recommendations for use of a single Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 booster dose](#) after completing the Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. (Also see: [Who is eligible for a booster shot?](#))

Per CDC and endorsed by CDPH (see [CDPH vaccine eligibility chart](#)):

These persons **should receive** a booster dose at least 6 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series:

- Age 65 years and older
- Age 18-64 years in long-term care settings (skilled nursing, assisted living, and similar)
- Age 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions that increase risk of severe COVID-19 (see [list of conditions](#)) OR (*added by CDPH*) with increased risk of social inequities, including communities of color and others at risk of inequities (see [health equity considerations](#))



These persons are eligible for, and based on their individual benefits and risks, **may receive** a booster dose at least 6 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series (see [guidance on individual risk-benefit considerations](#)).

- Age 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions that increase risk of severe COVID-19 (see [list of conditions](#)) OR (*added by CDPH*) with increased risk of social inequities, including communities of color and others at risk of inequities (see [health equity considerations](#))
- Age 18-64 years who [work or reside in settings](#) with increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 exposure and transmission. Those settings have not been exhaustively defined and may be further modified but are currently understood to include healthcare, firefighters and police, congregate care staff, education, food and agriculture, manufacturing, corrections, postal service, public transit, and grocery stores.

Due to uncertainty around the risk of transmission following a vaccine booster dose, recipients should continue to follow [guidance for fully vaccinated persons](#) to minimize spread of SARS-CoV-2 to others at this time.

So far, [reactions reported](#) after getting a 3rd dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine were similar to that of the 2-shot primary series. As with the primary series, [serious side effects are rare](#) but may occur.

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine approved by FDA is licensed under the brand name **Comirnaty**; this is the same product as the vaccine distributed under the EUA, and the two are [interchangeable for purposes of administration](#).

SFDPH Perspective

SFDPH continues to prioritize 1st and 2nd dose COVID-19 vaccinations for unvaccinated SF residents, and along with many healthcare partners across San Francisco, has made tremendous progress to date (see [COVID-19 vaccination data for SF](#)). SF healthcare providers are encouraged to continue to provide their patients and the public with access to primary COVID-19 vaccine series, ideally offering a choice of all three COVID-19 vaccine brands.

SFDPH also continues to provide 3rd primary series (“additional”) doses to those with moderate-to-severe immunocompromise and accommodate mRNA (“supplemental”) dose requests from Johnson & Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine recipients (see [SFDPH health advisory 8/18/21](#)) while planning for expansion of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine eligibility to children ages 5-11 years.

Booster Guidance and Availability. SFDPH is following the CDC/CDPH booster guidance described above and recommends that SF healthcare partners do the same. To reduce barriers to vaccination, patients presenting to SFDPH-affiliated sites may self-attest to eligibility for a



booster dose. Local vaccine supply is robust, and [booster doses are available](#) through health systems, clinics, and pharmacies across SF on a walk-in or appointment basis.

Moderna and J&J Vaccine Recipients. Boosters have not yet been authorized for recipients of Moderna or J&J vaccines, or for recipients of non-matched vaccine series, pending FDA and CDC review of additional data in the coming weeks.

Additional Information

CALVAX Grant Funding for Becoming a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider

The application cycle for CALVAX grant funding has been extended to October 15, 2021. Medical practices of up to 200 physicians, independent pharmacy organizations, student health centers, university health centers, and K-12 schools are eligible to apply for funding.

See <https://www.phcdocs.org/Programs/CalVaxGrant>. Up to \$55,000 in support can be requested. Application assistance is available; email: CCC-Distribution@sfdph.org

Resources

CDC COVID Vaccination Guidance for Clinicians

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>

CDPH Program Info <https://eziz.org/covid/>

FDA COVID vaccine site

<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccines>

SF.gov Vaccination Resources <https://sf.gov/get-vaccinated-against-covid-19>

SF COVID-19 Dashboard <https://sf.gov/data/covid-19-vaccinations>