

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT COVID-19 BOOSTER SHOTS

Who is eligible for a booster shot?

The F.D.A. has authorized booster shots for millions of recipients of the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Pfizer and Moderna recipients who are eligible for a booster include people 65 and older, and younger adults at high risk of severe Covid-19 because of medical conditions or where they work. Eligible Pfizer and Moderna recipients can get a booster at least six months after their second dose. All Johnson & Johnson recipients will be eligible for a second shot at least two months after the first.

Can I switch Covid vaccines for a booster?

Yes. The F.D.A. has updated its authorizations to allow medical providers to boost people with a different vaccine than the one they initially received, a strategy known as “mix and match.” Whether you received Moderna, Johnson & Johnson or Pfizer-BioNTech, you may receive a booster of any other vaccine. Regulators have not recommended any one vaccine over another as a booster. They have also remained silent on whether it is preferable to stick with the same vaccine when possible.

What underlying medical conditions qualify for a booster shot?

The C.D.C. has said the conditions that qualify a person for a booster shot include: hypertension and heart disease; diabetes or obesity; cancer or blood disorders; weakened immune system; chronic lung, kidney or liver disease; dementia and certain disabilities. Pregnant women and current and former smokers are also eligible.

What occupations are eligible for boosters?

The F.D.A. authorized boosters for workers whose jobs put them at high risk of exposure to potentially infectious people. The C.D.C. says that group includes: emergency medical workers; education workers; food and agriculture workers; manufacturing workers; corrections workers; U.S. Postal Service workers; public transit workers; grocery store workers.

Can I get a flu shot at the same time as a Covid vaccine or booster shot?

Yes. The C.D.C. says the Covid vaccine may be administered without regard to the timing of other vaccines, and many pharmacy sites are allowing people to schedule a flu shot at the same time as a booster dose.