Can I get my Booster Dose When I go to Get Other Vaccines?

Yes. You can get other important vaccines, like flu, on the same day as your booster. Some people prefer to have their vaccines administered in different arms to prevent arm soreness.

COVID-19 Vaccines Do NOT Contain:

- *Mercury, thimerosal, or other preservatives*
- *Antibiotics including sulfa*
- *Medicines or therapeutics including ivermectin*
- *Eggs/egg products*
- *Gluten*
- *Nuts including peanuts, tree nuts, nut products, or nut byproducts*
- *Metals*
- *Latex*

None of the COVID-19 vaccines were made using tissues. This means they were NOT developed using aborted fetal cells, gelatin, or any materials from any animal.

When Should I Get a COVID-19 Booster Shot?

It depends on your age and the length of time since your last dose of COVID-19 vaccine. For adults aged 18 years and older who have received the primary series of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson primary series, or Novavax, a time period of at least two months after the second primary dose is recommended before receiving a booster.

These statistics differ in children and adolescents. People ages 6 months to 17 years old should receive one updated bivalent booster. A second booster can be received after the same length of time previously stated. Children receive a smaller dose of COVID-19 vaccine than teens and adults and COVID-19 vaccine dosage is based on age on the day of vaccination, not on size or weight.

A Shot for Alabama Support

For help with COVID-19 vaccine questions, concerns, and assistance with vaccine scheduling, you can contact the Shot for Alabama Call Center:

334-844-2018

For More Information on COVID-19 Vaccines and Resources, please visit our website:

ashotforalabama.com

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
Harrison College of Pharmacy

extension
ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES

A Shot for Alabama is a collaboration between the Harrison School of Pharmacy and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System

COVID-19 VACCINE BOOSTERS

ASFA

What is a Booster Dose?

A booster dose is an additional dose of a vaccine that gives our immune system a "boost" of protection against an organism that causes infection so that we can keep the best level of immunity possible. With some vaccines, protection may decrease with time and the extra dose provides us with continued protection.

The COVID-19 vaccine is not the first vaccine to need extra doses. We get multiple doses of vaccines against diseases such as measles, flu, tetanus, whooping cough, and pneumococcus to keep our bodies protected from their infections. The COVID-19 booster works much in the same way – providing our bodies additional safeguarding against COVID-19 and its complications.

Do COVID-19 Booster Doses Work?

YES, Boosters provide increased protection against the original COVID-19 virus and most variants. The bivalent booster vaccine is proven to be 58.7% effective against hospitalization due to COVID-19 and 61.8% effective against infection in general. If you do get infected with COVID-19, even after getting a booster dose, your risk of hospitalization is decreased by approximately 90%. In people who get the Omicron variant BA.4 and BA.5 of COVID-19, hospitalization risk can differ based on how many vaccine doses you have received. Reductions in hospitalization after one vaccine dose is approximately 52% and 72% after two vaccine doses.

Are the Booster Doses Safe?

YES, The bivalent booster manufactured by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna have proven to be both safe and efficacious. All medications and vaccines have the potential to cause side effects. Some people experience side effects the day or two after the covid booster dose, while others may not experience any side effects at all. The side effects experienced with the booster doses are usually similar to the side effects experienced with the original COVID-19 vaccine. The most common side effects seen with the booster vaccine include: arm pain from the injection site, fever, chills, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, or nausea. Even if side effects were associated with the primary series, not always will the person experience the same side effects with the booster dose.

Does it Matter Which Vaccine I Get Boosted With?

For children aged 6 months to 4 years old, a booster dose should be the same product as their primary series if eligible. Children aged 6 months to 4 years who have only completed 2 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines should receive the Pfizer-BioNTech updated vaccine as the 3rd dose in their primary series.

Children aged 6 months to 4 years who have completed the 2 dose Moderna primary series should receive an updated Moderna COVID-19 bivalent booster. Children aged 5 years old who have completed the Pfizer-BioNtech primary series should only receive the updated Pfizer-BioNTech booster. However, children aged 5 who completed the Moderna primary series can get a different product for their updated booster.

People aged 6 years old and older can receive a different product for their updated booster vaccine than their primary series or last booster. A Novavax booster may be received if you are unable or unwilling to receive a Pfizer or Moderna updated COVID-19 booster AND if you are at least 18 years old, completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series at least 6 months ago, if you have not gotten any other booster dose.

How Does a Booster Dose Provide More Protections Against COVID-19?

The body's antibodies start to decrease making the immune response less effective against the newer mutated variants of the virus. The immune system remembers the virus with memory b cells that make antibodies in the case of viral invasion. T cells work by destroying infected cells and limit the severity of the disease. Boosters reactivate the immune memory and increase antibodies to allow the body to protect itself from infection.

What is the Bivalent Booster?

As of 2022, an updated "bivalent" booster is used to provide additional protection from those who have received their primary series of COVID-19 immunizations. The term "bivalent" is used to describe the protection it provides against both the original virus that causes COVID-19 and the Omicron variant BA.4 and BA.5. The bivalent booster provides better protection against the Omicron variant than the monovalent vaccines. Today, the COVID-19 strain present is XBB.

The bivalent booster has been shown to provide additional protection against symptomatic XBB infection for at least the first 3 months after vaccination in people who have previously received 2 to 4 monovalent vaccine doses. Studies show that the bivalent booster was 52% effective against BA.5 infection and 48% against symptomatic XBB. Since the COVID-19 virus is known to mutate over time, it is important to receive a booster to receive the additional protection against the current variant.

What Does "Bivalent" Mean?

Bivalent describes a pair of two things. In biology, it is used to describe a pair of homologous chromosomes. The bivalent booster means the vaccine contains 2 components. 1 part to protect against the original COVID-19 virus and 1 part to protect against the newest variant of COVID-19.