



COVID-19 Bivalent Booster FAQ

What is different about the bivalent booster?

The bivalent COVID-19 booster has been reformulated to target both the original strain of the coronavirus and the now prevalent and more transmissible omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants. BA.5 is the dominant form of the coronavirus now circulating in the U.S., accounting for more than 88% of cases. The monovalent booster previously used for third and fourth doses targeted only the original strain of SARS-CoV-2.

Who should get the booster?

The bivalent booster is recommended for all people who have received the initial vaccine series and/or subsequent booster doses at least two months ago. The Pfizer bivalent booster is authorized for people ages 12 years and older; the Moderna bivalent booster for people ages 18 and older.

If I never had the initial COVID-19 vaccine, can I get this booster shot?

The bivalent boosters can only be given to those who received their initial vaccine series.

What are the side effects?

The same side effects commonly reported when receiving the initial monovalent COVID-19 vaccines may be experienced with the bivalent vaccine. These can include pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle and joint pain, chills and fever.

Should I get the bivalent booster if I recently had COVID-19?

For optimum protection, it is recommended to wait three months or more from when you first experienced symptoms.



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Will the original COVID-19 boosters still be available?

No, the monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are no longer authorized as booster doses for individuals ages 12 years and older.

Are the bivalent boosters safe?

The FDA and CDC based their decision to recommend emergency use authorization of the bivalent boosters on extensive safety data for each of the monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, and from clinical studies of a similar bivalent COVID-19 vaccine targeting the omicron variant BA.1 strain. The FDA has compared the process to the way updates are made each year to the influenza vaccine.

Can I get the COVID-19 bivalent booster and my flu shot at the same time?

Yes, and we encourage you to do so.

When will the bivalent booster be available?

It is expected to be widely available at local pharmacies after Labor Day.