



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## IMMUNOCOMPROMISED PATIENTS & COVID VACCINATION

### What does immunocompromised mean?

The immune system is responsible for protecting you against germs, bacteria, viruses, and other invaders that can make you sick. “Immunocompromised” means a person has a weakened immune system or may be taking medications or therapies that suppress their immune system and make them vulnerable to infections.

### Why are people with a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) especially vulnerable to COVID-19?

They may not have enough protection against COVID-19 after just 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, and the protection they do have from receiving the vaccine may decline over time.

### If I am immunocompromised and may have encountered someone with COVID-19, what should I do?

Get tested immediately if you are having symptoms or someone in your household tested positive for COVID-19. If someone in your home has tested positive, isolate yourself from that individual. For COVID-19 exposures outside of the home, test 3-5 days after exposure. Timely detection of the COVID-19 virus is needed for appropriate treatment of patients with weakened immune systems.

### Who is considered to be moderately or severely immunocompromised?

- Those receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
- If you received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Moderate or severe primary immunocompromising conditions (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response



## Should immunocompromised people get an additional 3rd shot?

After getting your first and second COVID-19 shots, moderately or severely immunocompromised people should get an additional primary shot (3rd shot).

## Who should get the Booster Shot (4th shot)?

Immunocompromised people ages 12 and above, should get a booster shot (4th shot), 5 months after additional primary shot (3rd shot).

**COVID-19 recommended schedule for people with moderate to severe immunocompromise:**

Age Range	Product	Primary Series	Booster Dose
5 through 11 yrs	Pfizer	3 doses	None
12 through 17 yrs	Pfizer	3 doses	3 months after Dose 3
18 yrs or older	Pfizer	3 doses	3 months after Dose 3
18 yrs or older	Moderna	3 doses	3 months after Dose 3

**IMPORTANT:** Contact your primary care provider, Rheumatologist, organ transplant doctor or Oncologist/cancer doctor for any questions and to determine if you qualify for the 4th dose (sometimes referred to as a 2nd booster) of COVID-19 vaccine.

## Clarification of Existing Recommendation for mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Series:

- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should receive:
  - Three (3) dose primary series
  - One (1) booster dose

