



# 2023 COVID-19 Booster Dose

**COVID-19 has not gone away.** In fact, the virus continues to change with new COVID-19 variants emerging and infecting people. But what hasn't changed is that vaccination is still the best way to protect against the impacts of COVID-19 on your health and well-being.

That's why there are now some new vaccination guidelines and recommendations.

## New 2023 Booster Dose Recommendations

ATAGI\* **recommends** the following groups receive the 2023 booster dose:

- All adults aged 65 years and over
- Adults aged 18-64 years who have medical conditions that increase their risk of severe COVID-19 or have a disability with significant/complex health needs.

Children and adolescents aged 17 years or under are **not recommended** to receive a booster dose.

Groups **excepted** for this are children and adolescents aged 5-17 years who have medical conditions that increase their risk of severe COVID-19 or have disability with significant/complex health needs.

If you are aged 18 years or older and it has been 6 months or more since you had your last COVID-19 vaccine dose or confirmed COVID-19 infection (whichever is the most recent), you can now get for another COVID-19 2023 booster vaccine, regardless of the number of COVID-19 vaccine doses you have previously had.

## Types of Vaccines

All currently available COVID-19 vaccines can be used for a 2023 booster dose, however bivalent mRNA booster vaccines are the preferred vaccines. This is because these vaccines have been specifically developed for Omicron strains, which continue to be the most common strain of COVID-19.

If you have any questions about which COVID-19 vaccine type to choose, talk to your doctor to find out what type of COVID-19 vaccine may be best for you.

## ANTIVIRAL TREATMENT FOR AT-RISK POPULATIONS

Antivirals are medicines that help stop a virus infecting healthy cells or multiplying in the body. This means they can reduce the symptoms of your infection and shorten the length of your illness. By reducing how severe the illness is, you are less likely to go to hospital, develop breathing problems, need oxygen or intensive care treatment, or die from COVID-19.

Antiviral treatments for COVID-19 come in either tablet form (need to be swallowed) or can be given intravenously (directly into the bloodstream). They should be taken as soon as possible, usually within five days from when your symptoms start.

- If you have already tested positive for COVID-19, you may be eligible for antiviral treatment to reduce the risk of severe illness and hospitalisation.
- If you are severely immunocompromised\*\* and at risk of COVID-19 infection, you may be also eligible for COVID-19 pre-exposure treatments.

Talk to your doctor to prepare a plan for what antiviral treatment would be best for you if you get COVID-19.

For more information, read ATAGI's 2023 booster dose advice below:



\*Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)

\*\* Immunocompromised refers to a condition where a person's immune system is weakened and is less able to fight off infections and diseases due to various factors including old age, cancer and use of immunosuppressant medications