

Having received final guidance from the New York State Department of Health, below are our answers to the most common questions we have received about the COVID-19 vaccine additional dose.

Who is eligible for an additional dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?

People with moderate to severe immunosuppression qualify to receive an additional dose, usually because of an organ or stem cell transplant, HIV infection, steroid therapy, or certain cancer treatments that impair the body's ability to fight infections.

Cancer patients who are considered immunocompromised include:

- Patients being treated for blood cancers currently or within the last six months
- Patients who were within 12 months after treatment with B-cell depleting drugs (for example, rituximab or Rituxan®) at the time of their initial vaccination
- Patients who have undergone a stem cell transplant or received CAR T therapy within the last two years
- Patients being treated for solid tumors with chemotherapy — and some patients on immunotherapy — currently or within the last six months

Cancer patients not eligible for a third dose at this time include:

- Patients with solid tumors are not considered immunocompromised if their cancer has been treated with hormone therapy, targeted therapy, surgery, radiation, or is under observation only.

What documentation is needed to receive an additional dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?

Self-attestation of being moderately to severely immunocompromised is acceptable to qualify for the additional dose. There is no requirement for proof or prescription from the individual's healthcare provider. However, you must have a copy of your vaccine record.

Where can I get an additional dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?

As of 8/16/21 we know that Walgreens and CVS pharmacies are distributing additional doses of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines by appointment and walk-in visits. There will likely be several other locations. HOA is not providing vaccinations at this time.

These websites provide additional, helpful information about availability of an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine:

- <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>
- <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>

When should I get an additional dose?

If you meet the criteria, you can receive an additional dose 28 days or later after completing your first vaccine series.

Whenever possible, COVID-19 vaccination doses should be completed at least two weeks before initiation or resumption of immunosuppressive therapies, but timing of COVID-19 vaccination should take into consideration current or planned immunosuppressive therapies and optimization of both the patient's medical condition and response to vaccine.

Which COVID-19 vaccines can be used for an additional dose?

Patients who completed their primary immunization with either [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) or [Moderna vaccines](#) can receive a third dose. Patients should try to receive the same brand for the third dose that they received initially. [Those who received the one-dose Janssen/Johnson&Johnson vaccine](#) can receive either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine as an additional (second) dose.

Why do immunocompromised people need an additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

For a vaccine to work, it needs to activate your immune system. In some immunocompromised patients, this does not fully occur, so an additional dose can boost the immune response.

According to the CDC, 30% to 50% of severely immunocompromised people who had no protection after being fully vaccinated developed antibodies protecting them from COVID-19 after getting a third vaccine dose.

As always, we thank you for trusting us with your care. If you are not yet vaccinated, and are eligible, we urge you to do so and ask your loved ones to do the same. Our policy to allow one fully vaccinated visitor attend appointments with patients remains in effect for all areas, except infusion.

Please feel free to widely share this information. Also, please continue wearing masks in indoor settings and washing your hands frequently. Working together we can keep each other safe!