



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official  
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-202100924-00542-ALT (Health Alert)  
**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and  
Healthcare Providers – Statewide  
September 24, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** MSDH Updated Interim COVID-19 Vaccination  
Guidance – Pfizer Booster Dose

Based on guidance from the FDA and CDC, MSDH is providing updated recommendations for the use of COVID-19 vaccines and highlighting several priorities, including recommendations for booster doses in defined groups. **This public health guidance is interim and will be updated as additional guidance from CDC is provided.**

### General Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Series

COVID-19 vaccine is currently recommended for all individuals aged  $\geq 12$  years of age as a primary series:

- **Pfizer COVID-19 mRNA vaccine** is a two dose primary vaccine series, separated by at least 3 weeks between doses, for all individuals 12 years of age and older under FDA Emergency Use Authorization (Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has received full FDA Approval for ages 16 years of age and older).
- **Moderna COVID-19 mRNA vaccine** is a two dose primary vaccine series, separated by at least 4 weeks between doses, for all individuals 18 years of age and older.
- **Johnson and Johnson/Janssen viral vector COVID-19 vaccine** is a one dose primary vaccine series for all individuals 18 years of age and older.

Individuals are considered fully vaccinated  $\geq 2$  weeks after the second dose in a two-dose series of either mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) or  $\geq 2$  weeks after one dose of Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

**Priority:** All individuals 12 years of age and older are recommended by MSDH to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with a primary dose series.

Full vaccination with a primary COVID-19 vaccine series is especially important for all women who are pregnant, or women planning to become pregnant, individuals 65 years of age and older, residents of long-term care facilities, healthcare workers and anyone with chronic underlying medical conditions.



## **Additional or Third Dose in the Primary Series for Immunocompromised Individuals (Limited to Pfizer or Moderna mRNA Vaccine Recipients)**

**For individuals with moderate to severe immune compromise, an additional or third dose of mRNA COVID-19 (Pfizer or Moderna) vaccine is recommended after an initial 2-dose primary mRNA COVID-19 vaccine series:**

- Only individuals who received Pfizer or Moderna as the primary 2-dose series are currently eligible for the additional or third dose in the series due to an immunocompromising condition.
- The additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be administered at least 28 days after completion of the initial 2-dose mRNA COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Use the same vaccine product, when feasible: People who are eligible should receive a third dose of the same vaccine used for the primary two-dose series.

**MSDH recommends an additional or third dose for the following individuals:**

- Receiving cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood.
- 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 immunodeficiency (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.
- **Any other medical condition which, in the provider's opinion, limits the immune response to the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary two-dose series.**

For full Updated Guidance for an Additional Dose or Third Dose of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine for Immunocompromised Individuals, please see previous Health Alert Message dated August 16, 2021, at [15390.pdf \(ms.gov\)](#)

## **Booster Dose (Limited to Pfizer mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Recipients)**

**A single booster dose of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for certain populations at least 6 months after completion of the primary two-dose series of Pfizer.** The booster dose is currently limited to only those individuals who received Pfizer as the primary two-dose series.



MSDH recommends:

- **As a priority**, individuals aged **65 years and older, and residents in long-term care facilities (LTCF) should** receive Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer primary series.
- **As a priority**, individuals aged 50–64 years with **underlying medical conditions** (see below) **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer primary series.
- Individuals aged 18-49 with underlying medical conditions (see below) **may also** receive a booster shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer primary series.
- Individuals aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting (see below) **may also** receive a booster shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer primary series.

**Underlying Medical Conditions** to Consider for a Single Booster Dose of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine (**priority booster vaccination is for individuals  $\geq 65$  years, LTCF residents, and individuals aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions**):

- Chronic kidney disease,
- Chronic lung diseases (COPD, asthma, etc.),
- Dementia or other neurological conditions
- Diabetes (type 1 or 2),
- Down syndrome,
- Heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies),
- Hypertension
- Liver Disease
- Overweight (defined as a body mass index (BMI)  $> 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$  but  $< 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ), obesity (BMI  $\geq 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$  but  $< 40 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ), or severe obesity (BMI of  $\geq 40 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ),
- Pregnancy,
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia,
- Smoking (current or former),
- Stroke,
- Substance abuse disorders,
- Other medical conditions determined by the medical provider.

**Occupations and Settings** to Consider for a Single Booster Dose of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine (**priority booster vaccination is for individuals  $\geq 65$  years, LTCF residents, and individuals aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions**):

- All healthcare personnel.
- All teachers/staff/employees in K-12, preschool, and childcare settings.
- All first responders (including law enforcement and correctional personnel, public safety, fire services and emergency management officials).



- All employees in congregate settings (e.g., homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, etc).

**What is the difference between an “additional dose (third dose)” and a “booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine?”**

**Additional or Third Dose in the Primary Series**

Individuals with moderately to severely compromised immune systems are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 and may not mount the same immune response to the 2-dose vaccine primary series compared to people who are not immunocompromised. Therefore, an additional dose to the two-dose mRNA vaccine series is recommended at least 4 weeks after completion of the primary series.

**Booster Dose**

A COVID-19 booster dose is given to provide additional immunity after the initial immune response to the primary two-dose series of vaccine has waned over time. This will help maintain (or boost) immunity for longer time periods and provide additional protection. The COVID-19 booster dose is only recommended for certain populations who are at least 6 months after completion of the two-dose Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine series.



***Alerting Message Specification Settings***

**Originating Agency:** Mississippi State Department of Health  
**Alerting Program:** MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)  
**Message Identifier:** MSHAN-20210924-00542-ALT  
**Program (HAN) Type:** Health Alert  
**Status (Type):** Actual ()  
**Message Type:** Alert  
**Reference:** MSHAN-00542  
**Severity:** Unknown  
**Acknowledgement:** No  
**Sensitive:** Not Sensitive  
**Message Expiration:** Undetermined  
**Urgency:** Undetermined  
**Delivery Time:** 600 minutes

***Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings***

**Originating Agency:** A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

**Alerting Program:** The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

**Message Identifier:** A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

**Program (HAN) Type:** Categories of Health Alert Messages.

**Health Alert:** Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Health Info Service:** Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Status (Type):**

- Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
- Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
- Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded

**Message Type:**

- Alert: Indicates an original Alert
- Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
- Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
- Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted



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**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme:	Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe:	Significant threat to life or property
Moderate:	Possible threat to life or property
Minor:	Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown:	Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive:	Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive:	Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:**

Undetermined.

**Urgency:**

Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:**

Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).