



8 Important Facts About COVID-19 Booster Shots at VA

There has been a lot of talk about booster shots for COVID-19 vaccines. While the vaccines developed to fight COVID-19 have been shown to be safe and highly effective at both preventing the disease and lessening the effects in breakthrough cases, experts believe receiving an additional dose can provide further protection. To reduce confusion, VA presents you with 8 Important Facts About COVID-19 Booster Shots at VA.

1. What is a booster shot?

A booster shot is an additional dose of vaccine, given several months after the first series or single-dose regimen of a vaccine and timed when antibody protection is falling, with a goal of “boosting” antibodies and protection.

2. What is the difference between a booster shot and an additional/third dose for immune-compromised people?

A booster shot is a supplemental dose of the vaccine given to people who should have had a strong initial response to the vaccine, but whose antibody protection has fallen over time. An additional/third dose for immune-compromised people following an initial vaccine series is given to those who may not have a strong enough immune response after receiving the initial vaccine series, because of their weakened immune system. VA offers both third doses for immune-compromised individuals, and COVID-19 booster shots.

3. Who is eligible to get a booster shot at VA?

VA will offer boosters to staff and Veterans receiving VA care; and, as supply and capacity permits, additional Veterans, spouses, caregivers and CHAMPVA recipients under the authority of the SAVE LIVES Act.

4. Will VA contact me about receiving a booster shot?

You don't have to wait to be contacted to schedule your booster shot! Veterans who fall into

populations recommended by the CDC for booster shots will be identified through the VA's Veterans Outreach Tool, then contacted and advised of the recommended booster shots, which may be offered by appointment or walk-in basis.

5. When should I expect to get a booster shot?

If you got an initial series of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines, you can get a booster shot at least six months after your second shot. If you initially got the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine, you can get a booster shot two months after your initial dose.

6. Will boosters be available for each vaccine?

Following FDA and CDC recommendations, VA is offering booster shots of the Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J vaccines. However, every facility may not have all three vaccines, so please call ahead if you have a specific preference.

7. Can I get the Pfizer booster shot if I first received the Moderna or J&J shot?

Individuals who are 18 years and older may receive any of the COVID-19 vaccines as a booster dose. Individuals younger than 18 years old may only get the Pfizer-BioNTech as a booster.

8. Can I get the booster shot and the flu vaccine in the same visit?

Flu vaccines are recommended for everyone, and can be given on the same visit with COVID-19 vaccines.

Haven't gotten or finished your first COVID-19 vaccine series yet? VA is still offering initial COVID-19 vaccines. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine lowers your risk of severe illness from COVID-19, including hospitalization and death, even with the current circulating Delta variant of COVID-19.

For more information, please go to
VA's COVID-19 Vaccine Questions site:

va.gov/initiatives/have-questions-before-you-get-your-covid-19-vaccine/



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