

Health & Wellness

Boosters: An Additional Protection to Combat COVID-19



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Since 2019, we have had the unfortunate situation of living through an ongoing global pandemic, involving the infection of humans with a novel virus, SARS-CoV-2, that has caused the illness and demise of millions of people across the world. Fortunately, three vaccines have been developed and approved in the US to help combat the illness and decrease mortality. The Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson's Janssen's vaccines are readily available for

administration. By now, roughly 71% of the US population has received at least one injection of the COVID-19 vaccination. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a two-shot series, such as the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the J&J Janssen vaccine.

However, we are now entering another phase of the vaccination regimen: the recommended booster injections. Although the initial COVID-19 vaccines are effective in preventing severe illnesses, hospitalization, and death, health experts are now recommending additional booster injections as they are starting to see reduced protection, leading to an increase in illnesses.

To clarify, according to the CDC, everyone ages 18 and older should now receive a booster shot. If you received the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna initially, you are eligible to receive any booster approved in the United

States at least 6 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series. However, if you received the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen's vaccination, you are still eligible to receive any receive any booster approved in the United States, but you are eligible for the booster sooner—at least 2 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination.

People may choose which COVID-19 vaccine they receive as a booster shot. While some may prefer to receive the vaccine type that they originally received, others may prefer to receive a different booster. The CDC's recommendations allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots. Reported reactions after a booster shot were similar to those of the two-shot or single-dose primary series. Fever, headache, fatigue and pain at the injection site were the most commonly reported, and the side effects were mild to moderate. Serious side effects

are rare, but may occur. Contact your physician if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding the vaccination.

To find a vaccine or booster near you, call 1-800-232-0233. Make sure to bring your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card to your booster shot appointment.

References: www.cdc.org, <https://usafacts.org/visualizations/covid-vaccine-tracker-states>.

Established in 1844, the Lancaster City & County Medical Society (LCCMS) is a profes-

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sional association for physicians that serves to promote and protect the practice of medicine for the physicians of Lancaster County so they may provide the highest-quality patient-centered care in an increasingly complex environment.

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