



Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

Pharmacy Bulletin

29 February 2024

Bulletins provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccine Program.

Key Messages

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM ADVICE

2024 COVID-19 Dose Eligibility

In 2024, those aged 75 years and over continue to be recommended a dose of COVID-19 vaccine every **six months**.

- Those aged over 65 years of age, and adults with severe immunocompromise, continue to be **eligible** to receive a COVID-19 vaccine dose every **6 months**.
- All other adults can receive a **single dose this year**.

Clinical recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines can be found in the **COVID-19 chapter** of the Australian Immunisation Handbook (the Handbook). The Handbook is in the process of being updated to reflect updates in 2024, with updates available in the coming weeks.

2024 COVID-19 Booster Dose Recommendations

Age	With severe immunocompromise [#]	Without severe immunocompromise [#]
≥ 75 years	Recommended every 6 months	
65-74 years	Recommended every 12 months and eligible for a dose every 6 months	
18-64 years	Recommended every 12 months and eligible for a dose every 6 months	Eligible for a dose every 12 months
5-17 years	Eligible every 12 months	Not recommended
<5 years	Not recommended	

[#]for details refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook

Co-Administration

COVID-19 vaccines can be co-administered with other vaccines, like the annual influenza vaccine.

Updated Primary Course Advice

The COVID-19 primary course advice has also been reviewed and updated:

- All adults aged ≥ 18 years are **recommended** a single primary dose.
- People aged ≥ 6 months with severe immunocompromise are **recommended** 2 primary doses and eligible for a 3rd primary dose based on an individual risk-benefit assessment.
- Children and adolescents aged < 18 years are **not routinely recommended** a primary dose.
- Those aged ≥ 6 months — < 18 years with medical conditions that may be associated with an increased risk of severe COVID-19 are **eligible** for a primary course based on an individual risk-benefit assessment.

Primary Course COVID-19 vaccine doses by age group and risk status

	6 months to 5 years	5 years to < 18 years	≥ 18 years
Without risk factors	Not Eligible	Not Eligible	Recommended single primary dose
With risk factors	Eligible for 2 primary doses and eligible for a 3 rd dose based on individual risk-benefit assessment.	Eligible for a single primary dose based on individual risk-benefit assessment.	Recommended single primary dose
With severe immunocompromise	Recommended 2 primary doses and eligible for a 3 rd dose based on individual risk-benefit assessment.	Recommended 2 primary doses and eligible for a 3 rd dose based on individual risk-benefit assessment.	Recommended 2 primary doses and eligible for a 3 rd dose based on individual risk-benefit assessment.

for details refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook

The Continued Importance of COVID-19 Vaccination

COVID-19 vaccination remains the best way for people to protect themselves from serious illness or death from COVID-19. Here's why it's still important to get vaccinated:

- **Preventing severe illness:** Vaccines are the best protection against severe illness, hospitalisation, and death from COVID-19.
- **Protection for everyone:** Vaccinations are particularly important for those aged 75 years and over or with severe immunocompromise that increase their risk of severe COVID-19.
- **Keeping your guard up:** Protection from COVID-19 wanes over time. Regular vaccinations, tailored to one's age and health needs, ensure ongoing protection.

Reminders

- All COVID-19 vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).
- Clinical recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines can be found in the **COVID-19 chapter** of the Handbook.
- It is also the responsibility of primary care sites and organisations to ensure their website, resources, and policies contain current information.

Resources

The posters and resources are in the process of being revised to reflect updates in 2024 and will be available in the coming weeks.