



Aged care COVID-19 vaccination

Communication toolkit

This toolkit provides information and material to communicate with older people, particularly aged care residents, their families and carers, about COVID-19 vaccines and oral antiviral treatments.

Audience

Older people, their families and carers

Aged care residents, providers and workers

Background

Older age continues to be the biggest risk factor for severe COVID-19 illness or death. Vaccination is the best way to protect older people from severe illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19.

- People aged 75 years and older are **recommended** a COVID-19 vaccination **every 6 months**.
- People aged 65 to 74 years are **recommended** a COVID-19 vaccination **every 12 months**, and can **consider** a dose **every 6 months**, based on their individual health needs.
- People aged 18 to 64 years with severe immunocompromise are **recommended** a COVID-19 vaccination **every 12 months**, and can consider a dose **every 6 months**, based on their individual health needs.

Anyone else aged 18 to 64 years can consider a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine **every 12 months**.

If it is not known when the last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection was, it is safe to get another COVID-19 vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccines can be administered on the same day as the annual influenza vaccine.

The 6 month waiting period between a COVID-19 infection and vaccination is no longer required.

What's in this toolkit

- Key messages
- Frequently asked questions
- Newsletter article
- Social media post

Key messages

Guidance

These messages may assist you to communicate with your community and stakeholders on COVID-19 vaccines.

Talking points

- Older age continues to be the biggest risk factor for severe COVID-19 illness or death.
- Regular vaccinations is the best protection from severe illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19.
- Advice for COVID-19 vaccinations:
 - People aged 75 years or older are recommended to receive a COVID-19 booster every 6 months.
 - People aged 65 to 74 years, and people aged 18 to 64 years with severe immunocompromise, are recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 12 months and are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 6 months based on individual health needs. This should be discussed with a doctor or pharmacist.
- Among Australians aged 65 years or older, having a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 3 months reduced the risk of death from COVID-19 by as much as 74.9%¹ compared to those who were unvaccinated. After 6 months, the risk is reduced by more than 50%.
- For more information, see the Department of Health and Aged Care website: [COVID-19 vaccines](#).
- Find a COVID-19 vaccine clinic on the Health Direct Service Finder at healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services or call 1800 022 222 if you need COVID-19 advice.
- The Australian Government is working with the aged care sector to ensure everyone has access to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Residential aged care providers are responsible for making vaccines available to residents.
- The Government is supporting residential aged care homes to arrange COVID-19 vaccinations with local primary health care providers such as GPs and a pharmacist.
- Oral antiviral treatments are also available for people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- People aged 70 years or older should talk to their GP or nurse practitioner about:
 - whether an oral antiviral suits their health needs
 - developing a treatment plan if they test positive to COVID-19.
- You must start oral antiviral treatments within 5 days of symptoms starting or testing positive for COVID-19.
- Antiviral treatments help stop COVID-19 infection from becoming severe.

¹ Liu B. et al (2023) '[Effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination against COVID-19 specific and all-cause mortality in older Australians: a population based study](#)' *The Lancet*, accessed 12 October 2023

Frequently asked questions

What if I missed one of my COVID-19 vaccine doses?

Everyone aged 75 years and over are recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 6 months.

Anyone aged 65 to 74, and adults with severe immunocompromise are recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 12 months and are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 6 months based on individual health needs.

I had COVID-19 last month, but my last dose was more than 6 months ago. Should I have another dose?

If you are unsure if you have had a COVID-19 infection in the past 6 months, it is safe to get a booster.

However there is not much benefit from having a COVID-19 booster soon after infection.

Who can give me a COVID-19 booster?

You can find a COVID-19 vaccine clinic and book an appointment with the Health Direct Service Finder at healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services.

You can get a COVID-19 vaccine from your local GP or pharmacist, or a GP or pharmacist visiting your aged care home.

Where can I find information about COVID-19 and vaccines?

See the Department of Health and Aged Care website: [COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.health.gov.au/australian-health-services).

You can also find a COVID-19 vaccine clinic and book an appointment with the Health Direct Service Finder at healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services or call 1800 022 222 if you need COVID-19 advice.

What do I do if I get COVID-19?

If you get COVID-19, you need to start taking oral antiviral treatments within 5 days of symptoms starting testing positive to COVID-19.

Treatment can help prevent COVID-19 from become severe. Talk to your GP or nurse practitioner to find out whether oral antiviral treatments are right for you.

Newsletter item

Guidance

This content may be used in your newsletter.

Additional COVID-19 vaccination update

It is important to ensure the safety of our community, especially older people.

Older age continues to be the biggest risk factor for severe COVID-19.

Regular vaccination is the best protection from severe illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19.

Advice for COVID-19 vaccines:

- People aged 75 years and over are recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 6 months.
- People aged 65 to 74, and adults with severe immunocompromise are recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster every 12 months.

The COVID-19 vaccines can be administered at the same time as the annual flu vaccine.

Book a vaccination

Information and updates about COVID-19 vaccinations are available on the Department of Health and Aged Care website: [COVID-19 vaccines](#).

To receive a COVID-19 vaccine :

- **speak** with your doctor or pharmacist
- **book** an appointment on the [health direct service finder](#).
- call the healthdirect helpline on 1800 022 222.

Antiviral treatments

Oral antiviral treatments are available to people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

If you are aged 70 years or older, or have a risk factor, talk to your GP or nurse practitioner about whether an oral antiviral suits your health needs


You must start oral antiviral treatments within 5 days of symptoms starting or testing positive for COVID-19.

Oral antiviral treatments help stop COVID-19 infection from becoming severe.

Social media post

Guidance

This content is suggested for use on your social media channels.

Copy	Social media tile														
<p>Are you aged 75 years or older? If it has been 6 months since your last COVID-19 vaccination, it is recommended that you receive another COVID-19 vaccine booster.</p> <p>People aged 65–74 years and people aged 18–64 with severe immunocompromise should also consider receiving a booster, following discussions with their doctor or pharmacist.</p> <p>If you know an older person who may benefit from this information, please share it with them.</p> <p>Book an appointment at healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services or call 1800 022 222 for COVID-19 advice.</p>	<h2>Do you need a COVID-19 booster?</h2> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Age</th><th>Time since last vaccination</th><th>Recommendation</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>75+</td><td>6 months</td><td>Recommended</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">65-74</td><td>12 months</td><td>Recommended</td></tr><tr><td>6 months</td><td>Consider</td></tr><tr><td>18-64 with severe immunocompromise</td><td>6 months</td><td>Consider</td></tr></tbody></table> <p> If you know an older person who may benefit from this information, please share it with them. There is no longer a requirement to wait a minimum time between your last COVID-19 infection and having a COVID vaccination.</p>	Age	Time since last vaccination	Recommendation	75+	6 months	Recommended	65-74	12 months	Recommended	6 months	Consider	18-64 with severe immunocompromise	6 months	Consider
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