



Thursday 16 June 2022

Health  
Updates

# Health updates to keep your mob safe.

## Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on COVID-19 vaccines, and other health updates.

Welcome to the latest update for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households, communities and organisations. In this edition, read about updates to the COVID-19 vaccination program, COVID-19 oral treatments, why you should get a bowel test, and more!

### Latest news

- **Updates to the COVID-19 vaccination program**
- **COVID-19 oral treatments**
- **R U OK? Stronger Together, Mob Way**
- **Materials to promote routine childhood immunisation**
- **Don't delay – do a bowel test today**
- **New and updated COVID-19 vaccine resources available**





## Updates to the COVID-19 vaccination program

Australia's immunisation experts on the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) have recommended that some children aged 12 to 15 years get a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. This is because they may be at a greater risk of getting seriously sick from COVID-19.

ATAGI recommends children 12 to 15 years should get a booster dose 3 months after their primary vaccine course (the first 2 doses) if they:

- are severely immunocompromised
- have a disability with significant or complex health needs
- have complex and/or multiple health conditions that increase the risk of severe COVID-19.

If you're not sure if your child should get a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, have a yarn with your healthcare worker.

For more information about ATAGI's recommendations for COVID-19 booster doses for adolescents aged 12 to 15 years, [visit the Department of Health website](#).



## COVID-19 oral treatments

Some people who have tested positive to COVID-19, and are at risk of becoming really sick, are now eligible for oral treatments for

COVID-19. They will be able to receive this treatment in their own home without needing to travel to hospital.

Two new medications (taken as tablets or capsules) have been approved for use in Australia. They are called LAGEVRIO® (molnupiravir) and PAXLOVID® (nirmatrelvir + ritonavir). These medications must be prescribed by a doctor and will not be suitable for everyone. Talk to your healthcare worker about what is best for you.

These two oral treatments have been found to be effective in treating mild to moderate sickness from COVID-19 in adults aged 18 years of age and older, who do not require supplemental oxygen, and who are at increased risk of being hospitalised.

Read more about COVID-19 oral treatments on the [Department of Health website](#).



### **R U OK? Stronger Together, Mob Way**

R U OK? has launched a new 'Stronger Together, Mob Way' campaign to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ask the simple question 'Are you okay?' in their own way – Mob way.

The R U OK? Mob Way podcast yarns with the mob about personal experiences, both highs and lows, and how to start these conversations. New episodes are released weekly. Tune in [on the RUOK website](#).

There are also other resources to remind everyone to check in with their

community in their own way, including a conversation guide, posters, social media tiles, and videos.

Register and download the FREE resources on the [R U OK? Stronger together website](#).



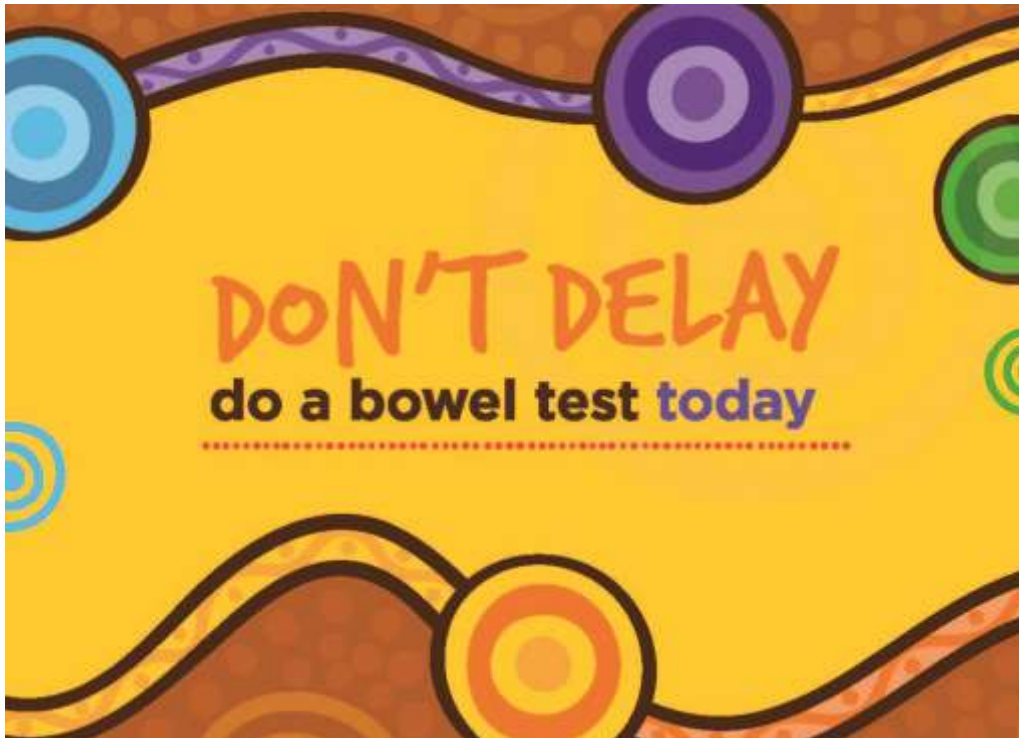
### Materials to promote routine childhood immunisation

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are at higher risk of contracting vaccine preventable disease than non-Indigenous children. Data shows that there is a gap between immunisation rates of Indigenous children and non-Indigenous children from as young as 2 years of age. Delayed immunisations leave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases at periods when they are most at risk.

For more information about routine childhood immunisation, [visit the Department of Health website](#). Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other dedicated providers, programs and activities that encourage uptake of routine childhood vaccinations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can order free tote bags from the website.

TOTE BAGS: *Get the Facts - Vaccinate Your Bubbas on Time - Don't be Late*

ORDER: from the [Resources section](#) of the website. Limited stocks are available



### Don't delay – do a bowel test today

Bowel cancer affects men and women, young and old. It's also a commonly diagnosed cancer among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The good news is that if found early, up to 90 per cent of cases can be treated successfully. Unfortunately, only one in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 to 74 years takes part in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program – less than half the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

Visit the Department of Health website for [information for healthcare workers](#) on the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, including [resources](#) that discuss how you can talk to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients about bowel cancer.

### New and updated COVID-19 vaccine resources available

A new information kit contains links to resources created for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with information about children, youth and COVID-19. Resources include fact sheets,

posters, social media content and videos. Download the children, youth and COVID-19 vaccines information kit on the [Department of Health website](#).

Download these new posters and social media resources:

- [Keep up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine doses](#) – poster
- [Stay healthy this season](#) – poster
- [Stay healthy this season](#) – social media tile and caption
- [Keeping up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines after testing positive](#) – poster

Some of our resources have been updated to include new information about children, booster doses and eligibility for the winter dose of the COVID-19 vaccine:

- [Common questions](#) – a fact sheet that addresses common questions and misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccines
- [Booster and winter dose](#) – a fact sheet that explains who should get a booster dose and winter dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and when they will be eligible.

Visit the Department of Health website for [all of our communications resources](#), including [resources for vaccine providers](#) working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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