



Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

Provider Bulletin

1 September 2023

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

Key Messages

ATAGI UPDATE

ATAGI Updated COVID-19 2023 Booster Advice

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) have updated their **recommendations** on the use of booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine in 2023.

This advice provides guidance regarding **who** should consider receiving an additional dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in 2023.

ATAGI **recommends** that all adults aged ≥ 75 years **should receive** an additional 2023 COVID-19 vaccine dose if 6 months have passed since their last dose.

ATAGI advises the following groups should **consider** an additional 2023 COVID-19 vaccine dose if 6 months have passed since their last dose, after discussion with their healthcare provider:

- All adults aged 65 to 74 years, and/or;
- Adults aged 18 to 64 years with **severe immunocompromise**.

Within the above groups, an additional 2023 COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be of most benefit for people who:

- Have no known history of SARS-CoV-2 infection (and therefore are unlikely to have protection from hybrid immunity),

- Have medical comorbidities that increase their risk of severe COVID-19, or disability with significant or complex health needs, or
- Reside in a residential aged care facility.

ATAGI continues to encourage **all adults who were recommended to have a COVID-19 vaccine dose in February 2023**, and who have not yet had one, to receive a vaccine dose as soon as possible.

While there is minimal benefit in having a COVID-19 vaccine dose too soon after infection, ATAGI notes that current SARS-CoV-2 testing rates have dropped significantly, so from a practical perspective it is challenging to know if or when individuals last had an infection. Where previous infection details are unknown, it is appropriate to proceed with a first 2023 dose, or an additional dose for eligible people.

A person may be vaccinated earlier than the recommended 6-month interval where considered appropriate, such as before starting an immunosuppressant, before overseas travel or if someone cannot reschedule vaccination easily (such as in an outreach vaccination program).

ATAGI 2023 COVID-19 Booster Advice – first and additional dose*

	2023 COVID-19 booster dose (February 2023 guidance)		Additional 2023 COVID-19 booster dose (September 2023 guidance)	
Age	At risk [#]	No risk factors	At risk [#]	No risk factors
<5 years	Not recommended	Not recommended	Not recommended	Not recommended
5-17 years	Consider	Not recommended	Not recommended	Not recommended
18-64 years	Recommended	Consider	Consider if severe immunocompromise [^]	Not recommended
65-74 years	Recommended	Recommended	Consider	Consider
≥ 75 years	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

- * mRNA bivalent vaccine preferred; for ages in which a bivalent vaccine is not approved, **use a vaccine approved for that age group**. Timing: 2023 vaccine doses should be given from 6 months after a person's last dose.
- [#] Includes those with a medical condition that increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness (refer to **ATAGI clinical guidance**) or those with disability with significant or complex health needs or multiple comorbidities which increase the risk of poor outcomes from COVID-19.
- [^] For details, refer to the **ATAGI recommendations on the use of a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine in individuals who are severely immunocompromised**

The Australian Government has **accepted** this advice and will include the additional 2023 COVID-19 booster dose for recommended people in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program from **1 September 2023**.