

Pfizer booster authorized for individuals in high-risk categories

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In addition to the FDA's August 12 authorization of a third Pfizer and Moderna vaccine dose for immunocompromised people, it has also authorized a Pfizer booster in certain populations to help increase protection against severe disease and complications from COVID-19. The CDC has issued this guidance about the Pfizer booster:

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Mobilize AZSM offers patients and families
[mental health and support resources](#)**

- People 65 years or older and residents in long-term care settings *should* get a booster (at least six months after the Pfizer primary series).
- People between the ages of 50 and 64 years with underlying medical conditions *should* get a booster (at least six months after the Pfizer primary series).
- Those ages 18 through 49 with underlying medical conditions *may* get a booster (at least six months after the Pfizer primary series), based on their individual benefits and risks.
- Those ages 18 through 64 who are at increased risk for coronavirus exposure and transmission because of their occupational or institutional setting *may* get a booster (at least six months after the Pfizer primary series), based on their individual benefits and risks.

Recommended time frames

- The recommended time frame for administering the Pfizer and Moderna third dose for the immunocompromised population is at least 28 days after the second shot.

- The Pfizer booster for high-risk individuals should be administered at least six months after the second shot.

Coverage, cost share, reimbursement, and billing

Blue Cross® Blue Shield® of Arizona (BCBSAZ) member cost share, provider reimbursement, and billing requirements for the authorized use of a third dose or booster will follow the same general guidelines currently in place for the first two doses of the vaccines. Please refer to our [December 15, 2020, provider notice](#). We are updating our system to accommodate coverage and reimbursement for the recent FDA vaccine authorizations.

What about additional doses for the general public?

At this time, boosters for the general public have *not* been authorized by the FDA. Authorized use is still limited to the high-risk categories mentioned above, along with the highly immunocompromised as defined by the [CDC](#). The CDC is expecting to review Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccine boosters as soon as data is available. For now, here are the recommendations:

Population authorized for additional dose	Pfizer	Moderna
Immunocompromised (third dose recommended)	12 years or older	18 years or older
Older adults (booster recommended)	65 years or older	
Residents in long-term care settings (booster recommended)	18 years or older	
At risk for severe COVID-19 illness because of a medical condition (booster recommended)	Ages 50 to 64	
At risk for severe COVID-19 illness because of a medical condition (booster optional, based on individual benefit/risk)	Ages 18 to 49	
At increased risk for coronavirus exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting (booster optional, based on individual benefit/risk)	Ages 18 to 64	

If you have questions, please contact your provider liaison or call Provider Partnerships at 602-864-4231 or 1-800-232-2345, ext. 4231.

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