

Examples of special groups recommended for ongoing COVID-19 vaccination (excluding severely immunocompromised)

This factsheet supports the Immunisation Handbook recommendations for use of Comirnaty (mRNA-CV) in individuals aged 5 years and over who are at increased risk of severe COVID-19.

Additional doses of age-appropriate Comirnaty (10mcg or 30mcg) are recommended for people aged 5 years and over who are at highest risk of severe COVID-19. The most current variant-matched version of Comirnaty is recommended once or twice a yearly, from six months after a previous COVID-19 vaccine dose. Recommended intervals vary by age and risk group – see the Immunisation Handbook for details (Table 5.3).

Age is a significant risk factor for severe COVID-19, particularly for those aged 75 years and older or those with increasing frailty. For this reason, twice-yearly COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for this group.

People with certain underlying health conditions also benefit from additional COVID-19 vaccination. For most, an annual dose of the most current variant-matched Comirnaty is sufficient to maintain protection.

The examples listed in the **table on the following page** are not exhaustive, and clinical judgement may be used to include people with similar conditions or to recommend more frequent vaccination, such as for older adults or those with reduced immune responses. Examples of people who are severely immunocompromised are outlined in a separate factsheet 'COVID-19 vaccination recommendations for those with severe immunocompromise'.

For eligibility and recommendations for Comirnaty 3mcg in children aged 6 months to 4 years, see the Immunisation Handbook (section 5.5.4).

Call 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863) for clinical advice

Groups recommended an annual dose of variant-matched COVID-19 vaccine, from age 5 years, who are not severely immunocompromised.

People in these groups are likely to have ongoing increased risk of severe COVID-19 after previous vaccination. These examples are not exhaustive, and providers may include individuals with conditions similar to those listed below, based on clinical judgement.

Comorbidity	Examples
Cardiovascular diseases	• ischaemic heart disease • congestive heart failure • rheumatic heart disease (acquired heart disease) • complex congenital heart disease • cerebro-vascular disease * excluding hypertension or dyslipidaemia without evidence of end-organ disease
Chronic respiratory disease	• asthma, poorly controlled or, for adults only, on regular preventative therapy • other chronic respiratory disease with impaired lung function, including cystic fibrosis • reduced lung volume or respiratory capacity (including recent TB infection) • neurological conditions that affect respiratory muscle control/airway clearance
Moderate immunosuppression or immunodeficiency	• immune-mediated inflammatory (autoimmune) disease • immune deficiency • HIV infection (well controlled, CD4 ≥ 350 cells/mm³) • transplant recipients
Neuromuscular and CNS diseases/disorders	• including cerebral palsy • severe neuro-disability • seizure disorders • spinal cord injury • hereditary/degenerative disorders
Diabetes mellitus	requiring medication
Chronic liver failure	
Chronic kidney disease stages 4-5	including pre-dialysis
Any active cancer	excluding basal and squamous skin cancer if not invasive
Haemaglobulinopathies	sickle cell disease or thalassemia
Cochlear implant	
Errors of metabolism at risk of major metabolic decompensation	
Pre- or post-splenectomy or asplenia, functional and anatomical	
Down syndrome, Trisomy 21	
Obesity with BMI ≥ 40 Kg/m ² or equivalent in children	for children >5 years and adolescents, ≥ 95 th centile for age
Other conditions with an overall impact on health	have serious mental health conditions (schizophrenia, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder or schizoaffective disorder) and/or are currently accessing secondary or tertiary mental health and addiction services