



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

MEDIA RELEASE

25 March 2022

Winter COVID-19 dose recommended for Australians at higher risk

Australians considered most at risk of severe illness will be able to receive a fourth COVID-19 vaccine heading into winter following advice accepted by the Australian Government from leading immunisation experts.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has reviewed available evidence and recommends an additional dose be given to people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 from four months after their initial booster dose.

ATAGI recommends that adults aged 65 years and older, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50, residents of aged care and disability care facilities, and people aged 16 years and older who are severely immunocompromised receive a winter dose to maximise their protection against severe illness.

Similar to other respiratory viruses such as the flu, it is likely an increase in COVID-19 cases will be seen over winter. Although COVID-19 is prevalent year-round, the cold weather can make it easier for viruses to infect our bodies.

A booster is your best protection against the most severe impacts of COVID and may provide protection against long COVID.

For this reason, the Australians considered most at risk should ideally receive their winter COVID-19 dose before winter. This new dose can be provided at the same time as the annual flu vaccine if it has been at least four months since an individual received their last booster.

Australians are encouraged to make sure their COVID-19 vaccinations are up to date, ensuring they have received two primary doses, as well as a booster. Even if you have had COVID-19, it is important to maximise your protection from severe illness and have a booster.

ATAGI will continue to review available evidence on the epidemiology of COVID-19, the potential impact of the emergence of new variants, and will update its advice if required.

To book a COVID-19 vaccine or booster, please use the [COVID-19 Clinic Finder](#).

For more information and to read the ATAGI advice visit www.health.gov.au.

-END-