



衛生防護中心
Centre for Health Protection

**Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases
and
Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases**

**Consensus Interim Recommendations on the Use of COVID-19
Vaccines in Hong Kong
(As of 15 September 2021)**

Introduction

On 15 September 2021, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases (SCEZD) under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (DH) (JSC) convened a meeting, joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP), to discuss the interim recommendations related to the administration of a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine for fully vaccinated persons and the use of COVID-19 vaccines in children and adolescents.

Administration of a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine for fully vaccinated persons

2. The JSC-EAP reviewed the latest scientific evidence and noted that the two currently used COVID-19 vaccines (i.e. Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines) are still very effective against severe disease in the majority of the population six months after completion of two doses.

3. The current local coverage rate of COVID-19 vaccines is still suboptimal, especially for the older adults, in particular those who reside in residential care homes. Vaccination for this group of people remains the priority at the moment. They should receive the COVID-19



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vaccination as soon as possible, as long as they are not suffering from acute illnesses.

4. There may be a need for additional dose(s) of vaccine in the future particularly for certain groups such as the immunocompromised and elderly population, or against the emergence of Variants of Concern (VOC).

5. The following factors have to be taken into consideration for the need for additional dose(s) of COVID-19 vaccines:

- A safe and appropriate time interval between the second and third dose;
- Latest development of second/third generation vaccines in relation to VOC;
- Latest evidence of effectiveness of additional dose(s) in different specific subgroups; and
- Latest COVID-19 prevention and control strategy in Hong Kong.

6. This recommendation supersedes the previous interim recommendation on the use of a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine for fully vaccinated persons issued on 22 July 2021.

Use of COVID-19 vaccines in children and adolescents

7. Over 17 million doses of the Comirnaty vaccines have been administered to children and adolescents in multiple countries since May 2021. Myopericarditis is a known side effect of the Comirnaty vaccine reported in both overseas and locally, with the majority occurred following the second dose in adolescents. To balance the risk and benefit in the local setting, JSC-EAP recommends persons aged 12 to 17 years to receive one dose of the Comirnaty vaccine, instead of two doses.

8. The JSC-EAP noted the study results of intravenous injection of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine and acute myocarditis in mouse model and the hypothesis regarding providing intramuscular injection of the Comirnaty vaccine at mid-anterolateral thigh to minimise the potential side effects of the vaccine.

The JSC-EAP recommends, as a precautionary principle, the option for intramuscular injection of the Comirnaty vaccine at mid-anterolateral thigh should be considered, especially for children and adolescents.

9. Study in children and adolescents 3 to 17 years old has shown that CoronaVac vaccine is immunogenic, and the local and systemic side effects are generally mild and short-lived.

10. In the Mainland where mass COVID-19 vaccination programme is being implemented, with over 60 million doses of CoronaVac vaccine administered, the reported incidence of adverse effects in children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years vaccinated with CoronaVac vaccine is not higher than that in adult population. A few countries have also authorised and rolled out the use of CoronaVac vaccine in children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.

11. The JSC-EAP recommends the Hong Kong SAR Government to seek further confirmatory data from pharmaceutical company with a view to extend the use of CoronaVac vaccine to children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.

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