



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 13 October 2022)**

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 (JSC) with the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP) revisited the use of COVID-19 vaccines in children and discussed the use of Comirnaty bivalent (original and Omicron BA.4/BA.5) vaccine in Hong Kong.

Revisit dosing interval of Comirnaty vaccine for children 6 months to under 5 years of age

2. On 1 August 2022, the JSC-EAP recommended a 3-dose series of Comirnaty paediatric vaccine (3 mcg per dose) for children aged 6 months to under 5 years. To reduce the small risk of myocarditis or pericarditis associated with mRNA vaccines, the first two doses are recommended to be given eight weeks apart, while the third dose be given at least three months after the second dose.



3. The JSC-EAP revisited the dosing interval of the Comirnaty vaccine in children aged 6 months to under 5 years taking note of the updated safety data. After deliberation, the JSC-EAP considered the recommended intervals for this age group would remain unchanged, while the dosing interval between the first two doses could be shortened to a minimum of three weeks for those with personal needs under informed consent after consideration of individual risk and benefit.

4. The aforesaid interim recommendations provide updates on previous recommendations regarding the use of COVID-19 vaccines issued on 1 August 2022.

Interchangeability of COVID-19 vaccines in children and adolescents

5. The JSC-EAP recommended that children and adolescents below 18 years old should complete the first two doses of COVID-19 vaccines with the same product when possible. In situations where the vaccine recipient is unable to complete the series with the same type of vaccine (e.g. due to severe side effects after the first dose, or if the vaccine is no longer available/accessible), vaccination with another COVID-19 vaccine may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Those who have completed the first two doses of COVID-19 vaccine may choose to use a different vaccine for subsequent doses with informed consent.

Number of doses for immunocompromised individuals down to 6 months of age

7. Immunocompromised children down to 6 months of age are recommended to receive either four doses of CoronaVac vaccine four weeks apart for the first three doses and the fourth dose given three months later; or four doses of Comirnaty vaccine with the first two doses given 21 days apart, a third dose four weeks later and a fourth dose given three months from the third dose.

8. Related recommendations on recovered patients are updated accordingly (Annex).

9. The aforesaid interim recommendations provide updates on previous recommendations regarding the use of COVID-19 vaccines issued on 6 April 2022 and 1 August 2022.

Use of Comirnaty bivalent (original and Omicron BA.4/BA.5) vaccine

10. The JSC-EAP noted both original (ancestral) strain mRNA vaccine and Omicron variant-specific mRNA vaccine can induce diverse responses against different variants, and the Comirnaty bivalent (original and Omicron BA.4/BA.5) vaccine may provide broader immunity against different variants.

11. The JSC-EAP considered that the Comirnaty bivalent (original and Omicron BA.4/BA.5) vaccine, when available, can be used as an alternative to the fourth dose of the current ancestral vaccines for eligible persons aged 12 years or above (or the third dose for persons with past history of COVID-19 infection). The dosing intervals should follow the current vaccination schedule.

12. Timely vaccination with the recommended number of doses is more crucial than the type of vaccine received. Based on local studies and experience, three doses of ancestral strain vaccines currently available in Hong Kong are highly effective against severe disease and death. Eligible individuals should complete all recommended doses with available vaccines as early as possible to build up their immunity.

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COVID-19 vaccination for individuals with previous COVID-19 infection

1) Individuals who are unvaccinated before infection

Vaccination status before infection*		Interval upon recovery# from COVID-19	Dose 1 after recovery	Interval between dose 1 & 2	Dose 2 after recovery	Interval between dose 2 & 3	Dose 3 after recovery
0 dose (unvaccinated) (who wish to receive CoronaVac [^])	≥ 50 years or RCH residents [@]	1 month	✓	1 - 3 months	✓	3 months	✓
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs [~]	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	6 months	Optional
	6 months - 49 years	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	1 month	✓	1 month	✓	3 months	✓
0 dose (unvaccinated) (who wish to receive Cormirnaty [^])	≥ 50 years or RCH residents [@]	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	3 months	✓
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs [~]	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	6 months	Optional
	18 - 49 years	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
	5 - 17 years	1 month	✓	5 months	Optional	-----	-----
	6 months - 4 years	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	1 month	✓	1 month	✓	3 months	✓

* "Previous COVID-19 infection" is defined as a history of positive test for SARS-CoV-2 by nucleic acid tests or rapid antigen tests. Number of doses received before infection for both CoronaVac/Comirnaty vaccines are only counted if the time interval between the previous dose and the first test positive date is at least 14 days apart.

"Recovery" is defined as 14 days after the date of the first positive test.

[^] CoronaVac and Comirnaty vaccines are recommended for use in persons aged 6 months or above.

[@] RCH refers to residential care home for the elderly/ residential care home for persons with disabilities.

[~] Examples include (a) Workers in healthcare settings and residential care homes for the elderly/ residential care homes for persons with disabilities; and (b) workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control points and ports)

[†] Recovered persons may receive their next dose of COVID-19 vaccine for personal reasons at a shorter interval of no less than 28 days after recovery.

2) Individuals who have received 1 dose of COVID-19 vaccine before infection

Vaccination status before infection*		Interval upon recovery [#] from COVID-19	Dose 1 after recovery	Interval between dose 1 & 2	Dose 2 after recovery	Interval between dose 2 & 3	Dose 3 after recovery
1 dose CoronaVac [^]	≥ 50 years or RCH residents [@]	3 months [†]	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs [~]	3 months [†]	✓	6 months	Optional	-----	-----
	6 months - 49 years	3 months [†]	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
1 dose Comirnaty [^]	≥ 50 years or RCH residents [@]	3 months [†]	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs [~]	3 months [†]	✓	6 months	Optional	-----	-----
	18 - 49 years	3 months [†]	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
	5 - 17 years	5 months	Optional	-----	-----	-----	-----
	6 months - 4 years	3 months [†]	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	1 month	✓	3 months	✓	-----	-----

* "Previous COVID-19 infection" is defined a history of positive test for SARS-CoV-2 by nucleic acid tests or rapid antigen tests. Number of doses received before infection for both CoronaVac/Comirnaty vaccines are only counted if the time interval between the previous dose and the first test positive date is at least 14 days apart.

[#] "Recovery" is defined as 14 days after the date of the first positive test.

[^] CoronaVac and Comirnaty vaccines are recommended for use in persons aged 6 months or above.

[@] RCH refers to residential care home for the elderly/ residential care home for persons with disabilities.

[~] Examples include (a) Workers in healthcare settings and residential care homes for the elderly/ residential care homes for persons with disabilities; and (b) workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control points and ports)

[†] Recovered persons may receive their next dose of COVID-19 vaccine for personal reasons at a shorter interval of no less than 28 days after recovery.

3) Individuals who have received 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine before infection

Vaccination status before infection*		Interval upon recovery# from COVID-19	Dose 1 after recovery	Interval between dose 1 & 2	Dose 2 after recovery	Interval between dose 2 & 3	Dose 3 after recovery
2 doses CoronaVac^	≥ 50 years or RCH residents@	3 months†	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs~	6 months	Optional	-----	-----	-----	-----
	6 months - 49 years	Not required	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	3 months†	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
2 doses Comirnaty^	≥ 50 years or RCH residents@	3 months†	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----
	18 - 49 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure or with personal needs~	6 months	Optional	-----	-----	-----	-----
	6 months - 49 years	Not required	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	Immunocompromised + ≥ 6 months	3 months†	✓	-----	-----	-----	-----

* "Previous COVID-19 infection" is defined a history of positive test for SARS-CoV-2 by nucleic acid tests or rapid antigen tests. Number of doses received before infection for both CoronaVac/Comirnaty vaccines are only counted if the time interval between the previous dose and the first test positive date is at least 14 days apart.

"Recovery" is defined as 14 days after the date of the first positive test.

^ CoronaVac and Comirnaty vaccines are recommended for use in persons aged 6 months or above.

@ RCH refers to residential care home for the elderly/ residential care home for persons with disabilities.

~ Examples include (a) Workers in healthcare settings and residential care homes for the elderly/ residential care homes for persons with disabilities; and (b) workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control points and ports)

† Recovered persons may receive their next dose of COVID-19 vaccine for personal reasons at a shorter interval of no less than 28 days after recovery.

4) Individuals who have received 3 or more doses of COVID-19 vaccines before infection do not require further doses.