



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 25 February 2022)
(Updated on 12 March 2022)**

Introduction

On 25 February 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) convened a meeting, joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP), to discuss and update the interim recommendations related to the administration of COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong.

Shortening time interval between second and third dose of CoronaVac and Comirnaty vaccine from 6 months to 3 months in adults

2. COVID-19 vaccines protect individuals from severe illnesses and complications from COVID-19. With the rapidly increase in number of locally acquired cases of COVID-19 in Hong Kong in the fifth wave, at least 200 fatal cases (including children) have been recorded as at 24 February 2022. As the case fatality rate of fully vaccinated cases could be up to 7 fold lower than not fully vaccinated cases based on available epidemiological data, individuals who are not vaccinated are strongly recommended to receive vaccination as soon as possible.



3. Those younger than 12 years as well as those aged 60 and above who have not yet received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine should be given priority to vaccination as soon as possible.

4. For individuals aged 18 years and above who had received two doses of CoronaVac or Comirnaty vaccine, a third dose of Comirnaty vaccine is strongly recommended. JSC-EAP recommended to allow adults aged 18 and above to receive a third dose of vaccine as soon as three months after the second dose. The priority of shortening time interval between the second and the third dose should be accorded to persons aged 60 and above in view of their higher vulnerability to severe COVID-19 disease and higher fatality rate in the local context.

5. The aforesaid consensus interim recommendations provided an update on top of the previous JSC-EAP interim recommendation dated 23 December 2021.

Use of COVID-19 vaccines in children

Use of a third dose of CoronaVac and Comirnaty vaccine in persons aged 3 to 17 years and time interval between second and third dose

6. In view that the proportion of paediatric patients markedly increased during the fifth wave of COVID-19 in Hong Kong compared with the previous waves, eligible children who are not yet vaccinated are strongly recommended to receive vaccination as soon as possible.

7. For adolescents aged 12 to 17 years who received two doses of CoronaVac vaccine, JSC-EAP recommended a third dose of either CoronaVac or Comirnaty vaccine to be given as soon as three months after the second dose.

8. For adolescents aged 12 to 17 years who received two doses of Comirnaty vaccine, a third dose of Comirnaty vaccine given at five months from the second dose is recommended following overseas practice. A third dose of CoronaVac vaccine should also be made available as an alternative based on

personal preference.

9. Taking into account overseas practice and lack of supporting scientific evidence, a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine is not recommended for children younger than 12 years at this juncture. (Updated on 12 March 2022 that the JSC-EAP considered a primary course of vaccination would comprise of two doses of Comirnaty vaccine or three doses of CoronaVac vaccine in adults and eligible children. Based on this principle, the JSC-EAP recommended a third dose of CoronaVac vaccine for children aged 3 to 11 years to be given at least three months after receiving the second dose of CoronaVac vaccine.)

Shortening of time interval between first and second dose of Comirnaty vaccine for persons aged 5 to 17 years from 12 weeks to 8 weeks

10. In December 2021, in view of the emergence of the Omicron variant, JSC-EAP recommended that adolescents aged 12 to 17 years to receive the second dose of the Comirnaty vaccine, at least 12 weeks between the two doses. The JSC-EAP recommended intramuscular injection of the Comirnaty vaccine at mid-anterolateral thigh, especially for male children and adolescents. In January 2022, JSC-EAP recommended two doses of a fractional dose (i.e. one-third of a dose) of the Comirnaty vaccine for adults to be given at least 12 weeks between the two doses for children aged 5 to 11 years.

11. In view of the worsening situation of COVID-19 in Hong Kong and overseas practices, JSC-EAP recommended to shorten the time interval from 12 weeks to 8 weeks for children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 years. It is further recommended that children and adolescents be encouraged to take the Comirnaty vaccine intramuscularly at the anterolateral aspect of mid-thigh.

Additional dose of CoronaVac / Comirnaty vaccine in immunocompromised persons who had received 3 doses

12. In October (with update on 19 November) 2021, the JSC-EAP recommended three doses of COVID-19 vaccine (CoronaVac / Comirnaty) for immunocompromised persons* aged 12 years and above. Considering the latest

WHO and overseas recommendations, the JSC-EAP strongly recommended to offer an additional dose (4th dose) of CoronaVac / Comirnaty vaccine to be given three months after the third dose for immunocompromised persons aged 12 years and above who had received 3 doses for better protection.

13. Immunocompromised children below 12 years are recommended to receive 3 doses of CoronaVac vaccine or 3 doses of Comirnaty vaccines according to eligible age group of the vaccine, with the third dose should be administered at least four weeks from the second dose.

14. The aforesaid consensus interim recommendations provided an update on top of the previous JSC-EAP interim recommendation dated 27 October (with update on 19 November) 2021.

*Please refer to the consensus interim recommendation dated 27 October 2021 (updated on 19 November 2021) for details about immunocompromised persons

February 2022

(Updated on 12 March 2022)

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