Releases (/releases)

(Hipkins, 2022d) [7 Apr 2022]

SHARE THIS

6 APRIL 2022

# Young people aged 16 and 17 eligible for COVID-19 boosters

**HON CHRIS HIPKINS**(/MINISTER/HON-CHRIS-HIPKINS)

COVID-19 Response (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/covid-19-response)

From tomorrow, young people aged 16 and 17 can receive a free booster dose of the Pfizer vaccine at least six months after completing their primary course, COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins has announced.

This follows Medsafe's provisional approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) as a booster dose for this age group.

"This decision is great news and means that from tomorrow, around 36,000 rangatahi aged 16 and 17 years will be eligible to receive a booster dose," Chris Hipkins said.

"They can do this by visiting any walk-in vaccination clinic around the country.

"A booster dose is particularly recommended for 16- and 17-year-olds who're at higher risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms and hospitalisation. This includes those who're immunocompromised or living with a family member who is immunocompromised, and Māori and Pacific rangatahi.

"Decisions like this are another important step in helping us protect all New Zealanders, especially as we get closer to the winter months.

"We know that over time, immunity to the virus wanes, so getting the booster gives the best protection against COVID-19.

"This is also a reminder to any New Zealander who hasn't yet had their booster, that even if you've already had COVID-19, getting a booster at least 3 months after you test positive helps reduce the risk of being re-infected and passing it on to others.

"It also reduces the chances of you becoming very ill and ending up in hospital.

"This decision on booster doses for our young people protects more New Zealanders from the risk of serious complications from COVID-19.

"I also want to recognise the team at Medsafe who've worked hard to assess all COVID-19 vaccine applications.

"Medsafe follows a robust approval process to ensure all the vaccines we use in New Zealand meet acceptable standards for safety, quality and efficacy."

**Notes:**

- You can check when you are due for a booster by visiting mycovidrecord.nz (https://mycovidrecord.health.nz/)
- If your second dose was six months ago you can get your booster by:
  - finding a walk-in vaccination centre at Bookmyvaccine.nz (http://scanmail.trustwave.com/?c=15517&d=0cjM4qc5iD2UzUIXV-Ggz2RpJ3ipdiWSUzVwhjKUqg&u=http%3a%2f%2fBookmyvaccine%2enz) or call COVID Vaccination Healthline 0800 28 29 26 (8am - 8pm, 7 days a week).
  - **From 14 April**, to allow time for technical integration of the decision into the digital booking system, this group will be able to book through BookMyVaccine.nz (http://scanmail.trustwave.com/?c=15517&d=0cjM4qc5iD2UzUIXV-Ggz2RpJ3ipdiWSU2khgW7Cog&u=http%3a%2f%2fBookMyVaccine%2enz).
  - **From 14 April,** you'll also be able to book for yourself or make a whānau booking (group bookings for more than one person) by calling the COVID Vaccination Healthline 0800 28 29 26 (8am - 8pm, 7 days a week).
  - Interpretation services, and text, email and NZ Relay options for deaf and hearing impaired are available if you need them on 0800 28 29 26 (8am - 8pm, 7 days a week). There is also a specialist team for disabled people (option 2 on the 0800 number).

TOP