



Guidelines

for COVID-19 Vaccination

Autumn 2024

Directorate of Health
Chief Epidemiologist for Iceland

Vaccines

In the Autumn of 2024, one vaccine against COVID-19 will be used in Iceland:

- Comirnaty JN.1 (univalent omicron vaccine Pfizer/BioNTech, updated in July 2024)

The vaccine is an mRNA vaccine that evokes and stimulates a response to the S-protein of the Omicron variant JN.1

Vaccination significantly reduces the risk of serious illness from COVID-19, but it is not very useful in preventing transmission to or from a vaccinated person.

Protection wanes over time, and it has therefore been found necessary to recommend booster vaccinations for individuals at increased risk of serious illness due to COVID-19.

Side effects of vaccines against COVID-19 are usually mild and are related to the reaction of the immune system against vaccine antigens:

1. Localised side effects, e.g., pain, swelling, redness, or itching at the injection site, can last several days up to a week.
2. Side effects, e.g. fever, headache, muscle pain, and weakness are rather common side effects that usually last 2–4 days (flu-like symptoms).

Serious side effects are rare individually but have been reported in large vaccination campaigns over the past 2 years. See [article about rare and/or serious side effects of COVID-19 vaccines](#). Some of them can be life-threatening, and [the use of certain vaccines](#) has therefore been discontinued in Iceland.

Individuals with an **allergy** to vaccine ingredients or a history of anaphylaxis due to injection medicines or of unknown causes should **not** receive vaccination against COVID-19 except at the discretion of an allergist, in a setting where treatment of anaphylactic shock is readily available.

Vaccination against COVID-19 **is available** for the following groups in **autumn 2024**:

| Age group | Risk groups | Vaccine and doses | Autumn 2024 | Spring 2025 |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 6 months–4 years | | Not available in Iceland | -- | -- |
| 5–11 years* | Underlying diseases | Comirnaty JN.1 10 mcg/dose | According to doctor's recommendation | According to doctor's recommendation |
| 12–17 years | Underlying diseases | Comirnaty JN.1 30 mcg/dose | According to doctor's recommendation | According to doctor's recommendation |
| 18–59 years | Underlying diseases | Comirnaty JN.1 30 mcg/dose | Yes | According to doctor's recommendation |
| | Healthcare workers | Comirnaty JN.1 30 mcg/dose | Yes** | Will be announced later if deemed necessary |
| 60 years and older | Everyone | Comirnaty JN.1 30 mcg/dose | Yes | According to doctor's recommendation |

*In Iceland, special formulation for children aged 5–11 years is not available, so they receive 1/3 of the usual dose of vaccine given to children aged 12 and over.

**The utility of COVID-19 vaccination for healthcare workers who are not at increased risk of serious illness due to an underlying disease is not greater than for the general population. Vaccination is available for organizations and staff to reduce sickness absence in vulnerable work environments, but vaccination has little effect on the spread of infection within an organization.

In general, the number of previous doses, nor the timing of previous vaccine doses or previous illnesses, need not be considered when reading the chart.

Regular COVID-19 vaccination of family members of patients in risk groups is not recommended except in exceptional cases, a specialist doctor of a particularly vulnerable patient should advise.

Availability of COVID-19 vaccines

The Ministry of Health performs contracts for the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of Iceland, in connection with the joint procurements of EFTA and European Union countries. The contracted vaccine is free of charge to the vaccinated. Vaccines against COVID-19 are not commercially available.

Registration of COVID-19 vaccinations

Cf. Regulation on vaccinations [no. 221/2001](#), all vaccinations carried out in Iceland shall be registered in the vaccination database of the Chief Epidemiologist. The notification and registration system for COVID-19 vaccinations in Iceland is linked to the Chief Epidemiologist's database. Vaccinations abroad with vaccines that are not used in Iceland must be registered in the medical record system Saga.

Certificate of COVID-19 vaccinations

Certificates are available at [Heilsuvera](#). Individuals without electronic ID can receive a certificate via e-mail from the healthcare provider who administered the vaccination.