



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# COVID-19 Boosters: What They Are and Why You Need Them

A message from Dr. Shannon McDonald, Acting Chief Medical Officer

COVID-19 booster shots are all over the news these days – including on FNHA.ca. Boosters are one of the next steps we need to take in our collective fight against the pandemic.

In this message, I'll answer some of the questions I've been hearing about the booster shots to help you make an informed decision.

### **What are booster shots and why are they needed?**

For a variety of reasons, the effectiveness of some vaccines can gradually weaken over time. An additional vaccination can “boost” the antibodies in your immune system to provide better and longer protection.

### **When is the best time to get a booster shot?**

If you are over 18 and fully vaccinated, you will be invited to get a booster shot six to eight months after your second dose. The minimum interval between the second dose and a booster shot is eight weeks, usually recommended for pregnant people or those who had the Janssen vaccine as their primary series.

### **Does this mean my vaccine is no longer effective?**

No. COVID-19 vaccine immunity decreases slowly. Protection against severe illness remains strong for most people even longer than six to eight months. However, it is important to have the strongest and longest protection by getting your booster shot as soon as it is offered.

### **Does it matter which booster I get?**

No. Both Moderna (SpikeVax) and Pfizer (Comirnaty) have been carefully studied and are equally safe and effective as boosters. There is no concern about getting a different vaccine brand from your previous one.

### **Should we be isolating again until everyone gets their booster?**

Your two shots provide good protection until you are offered a booster, so there is no need to return to the kind of isolation required before vaccines were available out of concern that you may catch COVID-19.

### **Have more questions?**

Get your booster dose: [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/booster](https://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/booster)

To register for a first or second vaccine dose clinic, visit: [gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html](https://gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html).

