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ADDITIONAL COVID-19 DOSE FOR IMMUNOCOMPROMISED PEOPLE

Stanislaus County - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have approved an additional dose of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for immunocompromised people. The FDA has amended the Emergency Use Authorization for these vaccines to allow for a third dose which can be given no sooner than 28 days following the second dose of the vaccine.

Ideally individuals should be vaccinated with the same vaccine they received for the first and second dose, but if that is not possible, receiving a third dose with another mRNA vaccine is acceptable.

Although the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines work very well in most people, there is evidence that those who are severely immunocompromised are not fully protected after receiving two doses and some in this small, vulnerable group benefit from a third dose. Certain medical conditions or the treatments used for specific conditions may prevent the immune system from responding adequately to two doses of the vaccine and would require an additional dose to provide enough protection from COVID-19. People who qualify for a third dose include organ transplant recipients, those undergoing cancer treatment, people with advanced or untreated HIV, and those on certain immunosuppressive medications.

Stanislaus County Public Health encourages people who may fall into this group to talk to their doctor to discuss the need for a third dose and the best timing for this additional dose. Third doses of the vaccines will be available through vaccination sites that currently offer Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. Public health will accept self-attestation of a qualifying medical condition at their sites.

A follow-up dose is not currently recommended for those who have received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The FDA is still evaluating data on the effectiveness of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in immune compromised individuals. COVID-19 vaccine booster doses are not for the general public at this time.

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