

Arrival of JN.1 COVID-19 vaccines and latest vaccination arrangements announced

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced today (November 12) that the first shipment of JN.1 lineage COVID-19 mRNA vaccines (JN.1 vaccine) (Comirnaty Omicron JN.1 30mcg/dose) has arrived in Hong Kong. Starting from November 19, the Government will provide JN.1 vaccines to eligible persons aged 12 years and above under the Government COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, replacing the existing XBB COVID-19 vaccine. The CHP urges high-risk priority groups, particularly the elderly and persons with underlying comorbidities, to receive a booster dose as soon as possible for effective prevention against COVID-19.

Vaccine supply

In light of [earlier recommendations](#) by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP to use JN.1 lineage COVID-19 vaccines, the first shipment of around 110 000 doses of Comirnaty JN.1 vaccine under the Government COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has arrived in Hong Kong. Government staff immediately carried out stringent checks and inspections in accordance with established procedures to ensure that the vaccine complies with product specifications and that the transportation process followed relevant cold-chain requirements. The vaccines have been put in validated ultra-low temperature freezers to ensure proper storage in accordance with the temperature specified by the drug manufacturer. On the other hand, around 110 000 doses of Spikevax JN.1 vaccine will arrive in Hong Kong in batches in due course. The Government will procure COVID-19 vaccines in a timely manner from suppliers in response to future vaccine demand.

Booking and vaccination arrangements

Under the Government COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, persons aged 6 months or above can receive free initial dose(s). The following high-risk priority groups can receive booster doses for free at least six months after the last dose or COVID-19 infection (whichever is later), regardless of the number of doses received previously:

- older adults aged 50 or above, including those living in residential care homes;
- persons aged 18 to 49 years with underlying comorbidities;
- persons with immunocompromising conditions aged 6 months and above;
- pregnant women; and
- healthcare workers.

Persons aged 12 years or above who schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment on or after November 19 via the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme booking system (booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp) will receive either brand of JN.1 COVID-19 vaccine for initial dose(s) or additional booster, subject to vaccine availability. Eligible citizens may choose to receive vaccine from Private Clinic COVID-19 Community Vaccination Stations (PCVSs), designated general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) under the Hospital Authority (HA), or designated Elderly Health Centres of the DH. The Government will continue to assist elderly people aged 60 or above living in the community to make COVID-19 vaccination bookings online. The relevant arrangements were set out in an earlier [press release](#). Designated specialist outpatient clinics of the HA will provide vaccination to patients. PCVSs will also provide walk-in vaccination quota for persons in need. In addition, the Government will continue to provide vaccination for adult residents of RCHs for the elderly and RCHs for persons with disabilities through outreach services under the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme. As announced in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address, the DH will also encourage and assist the elderly in the community, especially elderly singletons, to receive necessary vaccines including the COVID-19 vaccine via district networks, such as Care Teams. Persons from local communities can also contact [designated PCVSs](#) to arrange outreach vaccination activities.

The Government is progressively increasing the number of COVID-19 vaccination venues, including 12 designated Elderly Health Centres of the DH and eight GOPCs under the HA. The list of updated COVID-19 vaccination venues for persons aged 12 years or above is available at: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/venues_12years_above_eng.pdf.

Meanwhile, infants and children aged 6 months to 11 years can now continue to receive the XBB vaccine at Hong Kong Children's Hospital, designated Maternal and Child Health Centres or Student Health Service Centres under the DH and designated PCVSs. For details of vaccination venues, please refer to www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/venues_6months_11years_eng.pdf. The Government is exploring with vaccine suppliers on the procurement of toddler and paediatric formulation of JN.1 vaccines.

As local activity of influenza and COVID-19 may increase in winter, and persons who contract influenza and COVID-19 at the same time would be at a higher risk of severe complications and death, the CHP strongly recommends that high-risk individuals receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) and COVID-19 vaccination booster to reduce risks of serious illness and death. For citizens who have not yet received SIV while receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, they can check with vaccination venues for arrangements for influenza vaccination. According to scientific evidence, COVID-19 vaccines and seasonal influenza vaccines can be administered at the same time to provide dual protection.

A Government spokesman said, "The COVID-19 vaccines available in Hong Kong are all safe and effective and fulfil quality requirements. The key to maintaining protection conferred by the vaccine is to receive suitable doses

in a timely manner according to the vaccination schedule. The WHO has also pointed out that high-risk persons should receive booster doses at appropriate times to lower risks of serious illness and death."

Details of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme can be found on the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106934.html).