

Scientific Committees under CHP issue consensus interim recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (JSC) convened a meeting today (July 22), joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP), to discuss the recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination, including co-administration of COVID-19 vaccines with other vaccines; and the need for a third dose of COVID-19 vaccines for persons who have been fully vaccinated.

During the meeting, the JSC-EAP noted that the data on co-administration of COVID-19 vaccines with other vaccines are currently limited. It is suggested to have a minimal interval of at least 14 days between the administration of COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty or CoronaVac) and any other vaccines. Elderly should receive COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible, well before the arrival of the winter influenza season. There are circumstances when shortening the interval between the administration of these vaccines are justified, such as when there are increased risk of COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable diseases or when another vaccine is required for post-exposure prophylaxis, including tetanus and rabies. <

In addition, the JSC-EAP agreed that getting vaccinated, in particular for older adults and those with pre-existing conditions as they have a higher risk of severe disease and death, is a priority. Both Comirnaty and CoronaVac COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in protecting against severe diseases and death from COVID-19 infection, which is generally related to T-cell response. The antibody response is related to prevention of infection and symptomatic disease. It is also more susceptible to Variants of Concern. Therefore, it may differ among different vaccines.

The JSC-EAP considered that it is currently too early to confirm if and when a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed for the general population, and recommended to continue monitoring any new scientific evidence that becomes available.

<Details of the interim recommendations are available at the CHP's website www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/24008.html.