

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

â€‹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 (October 27), joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP), to discuss and update consensus interim recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination, including the use of a third dose of COVID-19 vaccines and co-administration of COVID-19 vaccines with other vaccines.

At the meeting, the JSC-EAP reviewed the latest scientific evidence and recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO) and overseas health authorities, and recommended three doses of COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty vaccine for ≥ 12 years of age and CoronaVac vaccine for ≥ 18 years of age) for certain groups of immunocompromised patients. The third dose should be administered at least four weeks from the second dose. It is noted that for those who had received two doses of CoronaVac vaccine, a third dose of Comirnaty vaccine may elicit a better immune response than CoronaVac vaccine. Comirnaty vaccine offers greater protection but personal preference is respected.

The JSC-EAP also recommended an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine for those who had received two doses of CoronaVac vaccine, in particular persons with a higher risk of infection including elderly aged 60 or above; healthcare workers; workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control points and ports), and persons with chronic illnesses. The third dose should be administered at least six months from the second dose. A third dose of Comirnaty vaccine may elicit a better immune response than CoronaVac vaccine. Comirnaty vaccine offers greater protection but personal preference is respected.

For individuals aged ≥ 18 years old in the aforementioned higher risk populations who had received two doses of Comirnaty vaccine, an additional dose of Comirnaty vaccine administered at least six months from the second dose is recommended.

Noting there is currently a lack of data on the administration of additional dose(s) in individuals who are fully recovered from COVID-19, recovered patients should discuss with their physician on whether two doses of COVID-19 vaccine are required after recovery, and an interval of six months between the two doses is recommended.

In addition, the JSC-EAP discussed the co-administration of COVID-19

vaccines with inactivated seasonal influenza vaccines. Given the local context, it is suggested to maintain the minimal interval of at least 14 days between administration of COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty or CoronaVac) and any other vaccines including seasonal influenza vaccine.

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