

EU regulators: J&J vaccine booster OK to give after 2 months

December 15 2021



A migrant receives a booster Johnson and Johnson vaccine against COVID-19 at Karatepe refugee camp, on the northeastern Aegean island of Lesbos, Greece, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021. The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control said Tuesday that it expects omicron to dominate infections in the EU within the next few months. It suggested that governments consider travel-related restrictions and press ahead with vaccination campaigns and booster shot delivery. Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas

The European Union drugs regulator said Wednesday that people 18 and older can receive a booster shot for the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine at least two months after their initial shot of the one-dose vaccine.

The European Medicines Agency also said the J&J vaccine can be used as a booster dose in people who have had two shots of the vaccines made by Pfizer and Moderna.

The recommendations by the agency's human medicines committee give countries more flexibility as they roll out or accelerate booster campaigns to tackle the spread of the new omicron variant.

The agency said that public health bodies in the EU's 27 countries may issue official recommendations on the use of booster doses, "taking into account the local epidemiological situation, availability of vaccines, and emerging effectiveness and the limited safety data for the booster dose."

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave the green light to Johnson & Johnson booster doses in October, both for people who initially received the J&J vaccine and for people who got immunized with other vaccines.

Johnson & Johnson earlier presented results from a large study that found giving a second dose just two months after the first bumped protection against symptomatic COVID-19 to 94% from 70% in U.S. recipients.

Mathai Mammen, global head of research and development at J&J's Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies, welcomed the positive opinion from the EMA, saying that a growing amount of data show that the company's vaccine "induces broad and durable humoral and cellular immune responses" either in a single shot or as a booster to rev up immunity.



A staff member from the National Health Organisation (EODY) prepares a booster Johnson and Johnson vaccine against COVID-19 at Karatepe refugee camp, on the northeastern Aegean island of Lesbos, Greece, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021. The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control said Tuesday that it expects omicron to dominate infections in the EU within the next few months. It suggested that governments consider travel-related restrictions and press ahead with vaccination campaigns and booster shot delivery. Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas



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Citation: EU regulators: J&J vaccine booster OK to give after 2 months (2021, December 15) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-12-eu-jj-vaccine-booster->

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