

# Chile to start administering 4th COVID dose next week

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Chile will start administering a fourth COVID vaccine dose to people with weakened immune systems from Monday, President Sebastian Pinera said, as the country recorded its highest number of daily cases in

six months.

New case numbers had been stable until the appearance of the Omicron variant saw them soar—as it has in many other countries around the world.

"A person without complete protection is six times more likely to be infected and 20 times more likely to need ICU hospital treatment than a person with a [booster](#) dose," Pinera said Thursday.

Chile's vaccination process has been hugely successful, with 87 percent of the population over three fully immunized and almost 67 percent having also had a booster jab.

But Pinera said experience had shown that the effectiveness of vaccines and boosters diminish over time and with the apparition of new variants.

People over the age of 12 with weakened immune systems will start receiving the fourth dose from Monday with all people over 55 eligible from February 7, as long as their last dose was at least six months ago.

On Thursday, Chile reported 3,134 people infected and 30 deaths.

Pinera said the last time the country had as many new cases—on July 8, 2021—there were 2,167 [people](#) requiring help breathing in hospital compared to just 404 this [time](#) around.

There were also more than six times as many deaths (186) that day in July.

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