



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Spikevax (Moderna) Vaccine for children 6 months to 5 years old

The Australian Government has accepted [a recommendation](#) from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) to make the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine available to children aged 6 months to under 5 years in certain at-risk population groups from 5 September 2022, following its approval by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) on 19 July 2022.

ATAGI recommends COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 6 months to under 5 years with severe immunocompromise, disability, and those who have complex and/or multiple health conditions which increase the risk of severe COVID-19. These include children with the following or similar conditions:

- Severe primary or secondary immunodeficiency, including those undergoing treatment for cancer, or on immunosuppressive treatments as listed in the [ATAGI advice](#) on 3rd primary doses of COVID-19 vaccine in individuals who are severely immunocompromised;
- Bone marrow or stem cell transplant, or chimeric antigen T-cell (CAR-T) therapy;
- Complex congenital cardiac disease;
- Structural airway anomalies or chronic lung disease;
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus;
- Chronic neurological or neuromuscular conditions; or
- A disability that requires frequent assistance with activities of daily living, such as severe cerebral palsy or Down Syndrome (Trisomy 21).

The recommendation is for 2 primary doses, except for those with severe immunocompromise who require 3 primary doses. The recommended interval between each dose is 8 weeks. ATAGI currently recommends vaccination be deferred for 3 months after a confirmed infection to provide a better immunological boost and optimise the duration of protection.

ATAGI **does not** currently recommend vaccination for children aged 6 months to 4 years who are not in the risk categories for severe COVID-19. These children have a very low likelihood of severe illness from COVID-19, but this is under ongoing consideration. Children that have already turned 5 should continue to receive the vaccines that are currently approved and available Pfizer for 5 years and above and Moderna 6 years and above.

Given the special needs of this group and the small size of the cohort to be vaccinated, only a small proportion of vaccination sites will be selected to deliver the vaccine. Planning is well advanced to support delivery through state and territory paediatric hospital clinics, some general practices and Commonwealth Vaccination Clinics, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Access will be prioritised to ensure the distribution of the vaccine to this initial cohort in the first instance. Prioritisation will occur based on geographic coverage of the eligible population, usage of current vaccines and expected patient numbers.

Paediatricians will not be required to administer the vaccines, but there are expected to be clinics in the major paediatric hospitals and primary care locations, which will be identified on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

We recognise the important role you play in identifying your patients in these groups, and would welcome your support to discuss the vaccine with families of children who may be eligible and to direct them to the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder from 5 September 2022.