

Indonesia starts COVID boosters for elderly, others at risk

January 12 2022, by Edna Tarigan and Fadlan Syam



A man receives a booster shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine during a third dose vaccination campaign at a South Tangerang Regional General Hospital in Tangerang, Indonesia, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022. Indonesia kicked off a COVID-19 booster campaign for the general public on Wednesday, prioritizing third shots for the elderly and people with compromised immune systems. Credit: AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana

Indonesia kicked off a COVID-19 booster campaign for the general public on Wednesday, prioritizing third shots for the elderly and people with compromised immune systems.

The government hopes to provide 21 million booster shots in January to people who received their second jabs at least six months ago. Some 117 million people in Indonesia have already received two doses of the vaccine.

"This effort is important to increase the immunity of society, considering the COVID-19 virus keeps mutating," President Joko Widodo said Tuesday.

Indonesia has reported more than 4.2 million cases and more than 144,000 deaths since the pandemic began. During the peak of the last surge in July, the country recorded 56,757 cases per day as hospitals were overwhelmed by sick patients and ran out of beds and oxygen supplies.

The country provided the Moderna vaccine as a booster for [healthcare workers](#) starting in July last year.

Indonesia's Food and Drug Authority on Monday approved emergency-use authorization for the Sinovac, Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Moderna and Zifivax vaccines, all of which will be used as booster shots. Several other vaccines are also being examined for emergency-use authorization.



A woman receives a booster shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine during a third dose vaccination campaign at a South Tangerang Regional General Hospital in Tangerang, Indonesia, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022. Indonesia kicked off a COVID-19 booster campaign for the general public on Wednesday, prioritizing third shots for the elderly and people with compromised immune systems. Credit: AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana

Indonesia's Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin said the government would consider the availability of vaccines in determining which boosters people will receive and that the boosters might be different from what people received in their first two doses.

People who received the Sinovac vaccine as their primary doses will receive half a dose of the Pfizer vaccine or half a dose of the

AstraZeneca vaccine as a booster, while those who received AstraZeneca's vaccine as their primary doses will receive half a dose of the Moderna [vaccine](#) as a booster.

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