



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

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MOH Circular No. 66/2021

31 May 2021

All Registered Medical Practitioners
All Specialist and General Medical Clinics
All Licensed Hospitals and COVID-19 Vaccination Sites

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON THE INDICATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS TO COVID-19 VACCINATION

As we progressively roll out the vaccination programme, it is important to achieve as comprehensive a coverage as possible across the population. MOH, in consultation with the Expert Committee on COVID-19 Vaccination, continues to review emerging clinical data on COVID-19 vaccines in population subgroups currently contraindicated to receive the mRNA-based vaccines. With the emerging local and international clinical reports on the safety and efficacy of mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines, this circular updates medical practitioners on the revised MOH guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations¹.

2. **Table 1** shows the revised guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations.

¹ As of 3 Feb, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been granted interim authorisation for use in Singapore.



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Table 1: Updated Guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations

Category of Patients	Updated Guidance
Severe Cutaneous Adverse Reactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stevens-Johnson Syndrome (SJS) Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TEN) Drug Rash with Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptoms (DRESS) Drug-induced Hypersensitivity Syndrome (DiHS) 	Allow Vaccination²
Breastfeeding	Allow Vaccination Can continue breastfeeding; no need to suspend breastfeeding
Persons with active cancer on treatment. On treatment is defined as undergone chemotherapy, immunotherapy or radiation therapy in the past 3 months OR planned in the next 2 months.	Allow Vaccination. Can be vaccinated in a hospital setting, after assessment by the treating oncologist on suitability for vaccination Patients with Cancer not on treatment can already currently be vaccinated at any available sites
Pregnant women (any trimester) OR Women who become pregnant after the first dose and before second dose	Allow Vaccination. Can be vaccinated after patient discusses with her obstetrician

3. The MOH guidance for vaccination providers and corresponding Annexes for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been made available on the Health Professionals Portal.

4. While not all medical practitioners are directly involved in providing vaccinations, all medical practitioners should be able to advise your patients on medical aspects of the locally available vaccines, including their suitability for

²The guidelines for individuals with a history of SCAR will be aligned to the current guidelines for individuals with a history of non-anaphylactic allergies:

- History of SCAR to non-vaccine related causes **can** be vaccinated.
- History of SCAR to other vaccines (rare) will warrant a referral to the allergist for further evaluation.
- History of SCAR to a prior dose or constituent of the mRNA vaccine (rare) will not be allowed to receive an mRNA vaccine again.



vaccination. **Annex A** contains a summary of the recommendations on the indications and contraindications to the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. **Annex B** contains a list of common medical conditions suitable for mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccinations.

5. Providers administering COVID-19 vaccinations are doing so under MOH direction. Serious adverse events, although rare, may occur when providing vaccinations to the population. Clinicians are expected to adhere to existing standards of good clinical care, including checking for the “5 Rights”, hand hygiene, aseptic technique especially with multi-dose vials, management of refrigerated vaccines etc. Clinicians who make a judgement call based on MOH’s guidance and follow the correct processes and procedures are indemnified by MOH if an adverse event occurs to the vaccine recipient as a result of the vaccination.

6. When further evidence emerges that require adjustments to the recommendations or when other vaccines are authorised for deployment in Singapore, this information will be updated and provided to medical practitioners.



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This circular supersedes MOH Circular 29A/2021 titled “ERRATUM TO MOH CIRCULAR 29/2021: UPDATED GUIDANCE ON THE INDICATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS TO COVID-19 VACCINATION”

Annexes

Annex A	SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON CONTRAINDICATIONS AND INDICATIONS TO THE PFIZER-BIONTECH AND MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINES
Annex B	LIST OF COMMON MEDICAL CONDITIONS SUITABLE FOR mRNA COVID-19 VACCINATION



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SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON CONTRAINDICATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS TO THE PFIZER-BIONTECH AND MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINES

RECOMMENDED NOT TO VACCINATE	
<p>Individuals under 12 years of age [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine]</p> <p>Individuals under 18 years of age [Moderna COVID-19 vaccine]</p>	<p>Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>Anaphylaxis to any drug, vaccines, food, insect stings or unknown triggers (idiopathic).</p> <p>Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction with <u>two or more of the following three criteria</u>:</p> <p>a) Hives or face/eyelid/lip/throat swelling; b) Difficulty breathing c) Dizziness</p> <p>NOTE: <i>Persons with NSAID induced angioedema, but not amounting to anaphylaxis, can be vaccinated.</i></p>	<p>Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>A history of having been prescribed an Epi-Pen</p>	<p>Suggestive of anaphylaxis risk. Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>Allergic reactions to the Moderna COVID-19, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, or any of its components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons who develop anaphylaxis after dose #1 • Persons who develop urticaria or angioedema with onset within 7 days post-vaccination • Persons who develop generalized maculopapular rashes, erythema multiforme OR bullous lesions with onset within 7 days post-vaccination 	<p>Do not administer vaccine May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>

<p>Allergic reactions to other vaccines (rash OR hives OR face/eyelid/lip swelling)</p>	<p>Do not administer vaccine due to concerns with cross reactivity with the mRNA-based vaccines.</p> <p>Refer to allergist for further review on the suitability to proceed with the mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines</p>
<p>Transplant within the past 3 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid organ or stem cell 	<p>Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>On other aggressive immunotherapy (e.g. Rituximab) such as monoclonal antibody treatment for non-cancer conditions</p>	<p>Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>HIV infection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD4 < 200 cells/mm³ <p>NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Persons with CD4 ≥ 200 cells/mm³ and VL suppressed can be vaccinated</i> 	<p>Do not administer vaccine. May be eligible for other COVID-19 vaccines.</p>
<p>Known to have platelets < 50,000 or Known to be over-anticoagulated.</p>	<p>Defer IM injection until condition improved</p>

CAN VACCINATE WITH ADVICE	
<p>Increased risk of haematoma with IM injections due to bleeding tendency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On anti-coagulation • Bleeding disorders (haemophilia etc.) • Low platelet counts (unless known to have platelets < 50,000) 	<p>Can vaccinate IM if patient accepts risk. There is no data to support SC injection.</p> <p>Advise to hold firm pressure at the injection site for at least 5 minutes post-vaccination.</p>
Fever (Temperature > 37.5C) in past 24 hours	Defer vaccination until fever resolved.
Pregnant women (any trimester)	Can vaccinate, after patient discusses with her obstetrician.
Women who become pregnant after first dose and before second dose	Can vaccinate, after patient discusses with her obstetrician.
Planning pregnancy	Can vaccinate
<p>Active cancer on treatment. On treatment is defined as undergone chemotherapy, immunotherapy* or radiation therapy in the past 3 months OR planned in the next 2 months.</p> <p>NOTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Persons on hormonal therapy can be vaccinated at any available vaccination sites</i> • <i>Persons with cancer NOT on treatment with chemotherapy, immunotherapy or radiation therapy can be vaccinated at any available vaccination sites</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Not on treatment in the past 3 months</i> AND ○ <i>No planned treatment in next 2 months</i> • <i>Persons with a history of cancer who are in remission, can be vaccinated at any available vaccination sites</i> <p><i>*Includes immune checkpoint inhibitors.</i></p>	<p>Can be vaccinated in a hospital setting, after assessment on the suitability of receiving the vaccine by the treating specialist.</p>
Took other non-COVID-19 vaccines.	Defer vaccination until there is a minimum interval of 14 days before or after any other vaccines.

LIST OF COMMON MEDICAL CONDITIONS SUITABLE FOR mRNA-BASED COVID-19 VACCINES

Can my patients get the mRNA-based vaccine if they have the following medical conditions?				
No	Condition	Can get vaccinated?		Comment
1	Acute illness (e.g. pneumonia)		No	Wait until after recovered from acute illness
2	Allergic rhinitis	Yes		
3	Allergies to medications, food and insect stings (not anaphylaxis)	Yes		Hives, rash, angioedema alone can be vaccinated. Chronic/idiopathic urticaria can be vaccinated.
4	Allergies to prior dose of mRNA COVID vaccine or vaccine components		No	
5	Allergies to other vaccines		No	Refer to allergist
6	Anaphylaxis* to meds, vaccines, food, insect stings etc		No	Also includes individuals who were prescribed Epi-Pen
7	Angioedema to painkillers	Yes		Face, eyelid, lip, throat swelling alone (without any shortness of breath or dizziness) can be vaccinated.
8	Anti-coagulation	Yes		Press firmly for at least 5 minutes
9	Anti-platelet agents	Yes		
10	Asthma	Yes		Bring salbutamol inhaler for use PRN if there are symptoms
11	Atrial fibrillation, any cardiac arrhythmia	Yes		
12	Autoimmune diseases of all kinds	Yes		E.g. Lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohns Disease Refer to immunotherapy table below if on immunotherapy.
13	Bell's palsy	Yes		
14	Breastfeeding	Yes		Can continue breastfeeding; no need to suspend breastfeeding
15	Blood disorders of any kind	Yes		E.g. Thalassemia major/minor, hemophilia

16	Cancer – on treatment	Yes		Must consult treating specialist on suitability to receive vaccination
17	Cancer – not on treatment	Yes		Not on chemotherapy, radiation therapy or immunotherapy in the past 3 months AND No planned chemotherapy, radiation therapy or immunotherapy in the next 2 months
18	Cancer – treated and in remission	Yes		
19	Chronic obstructive lung disease (COPD)	Yes		
20	Dementia of any kind	Yes		
21	Diabetes mellitus	Yes		
22	Dialysis - end stage renal failure	Yes		With or without renal replacement therapy
23	Eczema	Yes		
24	Epilepsy or seizure disorders of any kind	Yes		
25	Fever		No	Wait until fever resolved at least 24 hours
26	G6PD deficiency	Yes		
27	Gout	Yes		
28	Guillain-Barre syndrome	Yes		
29	Heart disease of any kind	Yes		
30	Heart murmurs of any kind	Yes		
31	Hepatitis B carrier	Yes		
32	Hepatitis C chronic infection	Yes		
33	HIV with CD4 \geq 200	Yes		Based on most recent CD4 result
34	HIV with CD4 $<$ 200		No	Based on most recent CD4 result
35	Hormonal replacement therapy	Yes		For cancers, peri-menopausal or osteoporosis
36	Hyperlipidemia	Yes		
37	Hypertension	Yes		
38	Kidney disease of any kind	Yes		
39	Liver problems or cirrhosis	Yes		
40	Low platelets (\geq 50,000)	Yes		Press firmly for at least 5 minutes
41	Low platelets ($<$ 50,000)		No	Until platelets improve $>$ 50,000
42	Lung disease of any kind	Yes		
43	Neurologic disease of any kind	Yes		E.g. Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis Check immunotherapy table below

				if on immunotherapy
44	Osteoporosis	Yes		
45	Planning pregnancy (including IVF)	Yes		
46	Pregnancy – any trimester	Yes		Patient to discuss risks and benefits with her obstetrician before vaccination
47	Severe Cutaneous Adverse Reaction (SJS, TEN, DRESS, DiHS)	Yes		
48	Skin disorders of any kind	Yes		Refer to immunotherapy table below if on immunotherapy.
49	Splenectomy or asplenic	Yes		
50	Steroids (oral, IV, IM, intra-articular)	Yes		
51	Stroke	Yes		
52	Surgery of any kind (recent or old)	Yes		
53	Thyroid disease of any kind	Yes		
54	Transplant – solid organ or stem cell		No	Wait until > 3 months after transplant
55	Tuberculosis	Yes		
This is not an exhaustive list of conditions which are safe for COVID-19 vaccination				

Can my patients get the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine if they are taking immunotherapy for non-cancer conditions?

No	Type of Immunotherapy	Can get vaccinated?	
1	Allergy immunotherapy	Yes	
2	Agents inhibiting leukocyte movement	Yes	
3	Agents inhibiting T-cell co-stimulation		No
4	Anti-cytokine therapy	Yes	
5	Anti-thymocyte globulin		No
6	Monoclonal antibodies to B-cells		No
7	Monoclonal antibodies to T-cells		No
8	Monoclonal antibodies to complement		No
9	RANK ligand inhibitors	Yes	
10	Small molecule kinase inhibitors	Yes	
11	Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) inhibitors	Yes	

Aggressive immunotherapy refers to immunotherapy that causes **SEVERE** immunosuppression.

Recommendations in the table are for patients on monotherapy for non-cancer conditions. If patients are on any combination therapy, or if in doubt, please advise patients to consult their treating specialists.





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