COVID-19 Booster Shot Fact Sheet
November 12, 2021

1. **Why are boosters needed? (What is the data that supports booster shots?)**
    1) Studies from Israel and the CDC show that 6 months after the second COVID-19 mRNA vaccination dose, our protection from COVID-19 is decreased and breakthrough infections are more common.
    2) People over age 65 are at greater for breakthrough cases and complications from COVID 19 infections after 6 months from their initial mRNA vaccination
    3) The vaccine remains highly effective at preventing hospitalizations and deaths.
    4) An Israeli study shows that after a booster shot, the risk of a COVID-19 infection decreases by ten-fold.
    5) Booster shots are used for other common vaccinations, such as the hepatitis B and HPV vaccines.

2. **Who is currently eligible for a COVID-19 booster shot?**
    1) Immunocompromised patients can get a "3rd shot" of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, as they often do not make enough antibodies to be protected after only two doses of the vaccine. Note: This "3rd shot" is different than a booster shot, where the person was adequately protected after their first 2 vaccine doses.
    2) **The FDA and CDC have agreed that COVID-19 vaccine booster shots are safe and appropriate for ALL ADULTS who have received their Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine and completed their initial series at least 6 months ago.** https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html?s_cid=11710:covid%20booster%20immunocompromised:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN.Grants:FY22
    3) The FDA and CDC also recommend a booster shot for anyone who has received a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine more than 2 months ago. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html?s_cid=11708:65%20and%20older%20covid%20booster:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN.Grants:FY22

3. **What about mixing and matching different COVID-19 vaccines?**
    Mixing different COVID-19 vaccines can be done with any of the COVID-19 vaccines as per the CDC and FDA recommendations.

5. **Are the COVID-19 vaccine booster shots safe?**
   1) The data on booster shots for the all COVID-19 vaccines shows they are very safe.
   2) As stated in the CDC publication dated October 1, 2021, there are no new safety concerns related to the Pfizer or Moderna booster shots. There only remains a small risk of myocarditis and pericarditis with the vaccine.
      Source for safety evaluation of booster shots:
      https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7039e4.htm

6. **What are the expected side effects of the booster shot compared to the first 2 shots of either of the mRNA COVID 19-vaccines?**
   1) The side effects are very similar to those experienced by many after the second dose of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine shots. If you were tired or had a fever after the second shot, you should expect that can also happen after you receive the booster shot.
   2) Most common side effects are:
      a) Sore arm
      b) Fatigue
      c) Headache
      d) fever
   3) The side effects usually last just one day.
   4) 77.6% and 76.5% reported local or systemic reactions, respectively, after the second dose; 79.4% and 74.1% reported local or systemic reactions, respectively, after the third dose.

7. **Do you need a booster shot if you have had a COVID-19 infection?**
   Yes! Studies have shown that protection after a COVID-19 infection is not as strong as after a vaccine dose, and you have a 2.3 times greater risk of getting another COVID-19 infection without full vaccination.

8. **Will we need more boosters after this one, such as yearly boosters?**
   1) We don't know yet if additional boosters will be necessary.
   2) We are continuing to learn how long our protection will last.
   3) We are also witnessing the scientific process at work and can expect recommendations to change as we learn more.