

## - Vaccination

# When to get a booster shot

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Covid-19 vaccine booster shots may not be necessary for everyone, as some people may have developed enough antibodies to fight the virus, UAE doctors have said during a recent forum that busted vaccination myths.

The key, they added, would be to take antibody tests that could help doctors determine whether a person needs only one booster shot, two doses of a second vaccine, or none at all.

Recently, the UAE authorities have strongly warned against taking more vaccine doses than required, stressing that contradicting physicians' advice may expose one to health complications. They reiterated that following doctors' recommendations is a must.

Dr Sweta Adatia, medical director and neurologist at RAK Hospital, said: "If you've finished one course of a particular vaccine, get an antibody test done and check against complete neutralisation to see if you have enough antibody to fight the virus. If it's enough, then there is no need for a booster shot or a second vaccine."

She added: "If someone is looking to get revaccinated, then a window of six months is important .... That is also what the country's Ministry of Health and Prevention is proposing and that's what everyone here follows."

Currently, the elderly and those with chronic illnesses are being offered the booster dose after a careful assessment by the health authorities.

Asked why there are some individuals who get infected despite being fully vaccinated, doctors explain that the immune system also has a role to play. Dr Hafiz Ahmad, assistant professor at RAK Medical and Health Sciences University and head of the molecular division at RAK Hospital, said: "The protection does not depend solely on the vaccine, it depends on the immune system as well. How the Sinopharm vaccine boosts your immune response will be different from how the same vaccine boosts my immune response. It differs from person to person."

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Dr Sweta Adatia Medical director and neurologist, RAK Hospital