

Dr Tony Holohan
Chief Medical Officer
Department of Health
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15 December 2021

cc Dr Colette Bonner DCMO
Dr Ronan Glynn DCMO
Dr Siobhán O’Sullivan Chief Bioethicist
Ms Pauline Brady CMO Office

Re: Waiver of 15 minute observation period post booster COVID-19 mRNA vaccine

Dear Dr. Holohan,

NIAC recommends that the 15 minute observation period following administration of a homologous or heterologous booster COVID-19 mRNA vaccine can be temporarily waived.

The reasons for this recommendation are:

- As the Omicron variant is spreading rapidly there is an urgent need to give people booster vaccinations as soon as possible. Booster doses of an mRNA vaccine have been shown to significantly increase vaccine effectiveness against Omicron.
- The risk of a serious allergic reaction after mRNA vaccination is very rare (1-10 per million).
- Removing the 15 minute post observation requirement will enable more people to be vaccinated.

This recommendation does **not** apply to those:

- receiving a primary COVID-19 vaccine course, who should be observed for 15 minutes.
- with a history of anaphylaxis from any cause receiving a booster vaccine, who should be observed for at least 30 minutes.

Vaccine recipients should be advised to seek urgent medical attention if they have symptoms suggestive of an allergic reaction such as difficulty breathing, feeling faint, rapid heartbeat or a skin rash.

NIAC will continue to closely monitor relevant data and will update this advice as necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Karina Butler
Imc 03054

Professor Karina Butler
Chair
National Immunisation Advisory Committee