



“A Sincere Appeal to Children, Adolescents and Adults Recovered from COVID-19 to Receive COVID-19 Vaccination to Prevent Severe Illnesses and Complications - Joint Statement by The Hong Kong Paediatric Society, the Macau Paediatric Society, The Hong Kong Society for Paediatric Immunology Allergy and Infectious Diseases, The Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Paediatric and Adolescent Dermatology Society, the College of Nursing Hong Kong, the Hong Kong College of Paediatric Nursing, the Hong Kong Paediatric Nurses Association and the Hong Kong Midwives Association”

Prevention of COVID-19 Related Severe Diseases and Complications

During the fifth wave of the COVID-19 outbreak early this year, more than one million Hong Kong citizens and more than 100,000 children were infected with the Omicron variant of the novel coronavirus. Many adults and parents think that they and their children have permanent immunity after contracting the SARS-CoV2, so they don't need to receive COVID-19 vaccination. In fact, this is a very **wrong** idea. Scientific research has confirmed that the immune protection after infection with Omicron is short lived. Even if the body will produce antibodies against the virus after COVID-19 infection, the level of these antibodies and the protection conferred by these antibodies can only be maintained for a short period of time. It has been more than half a year since the outbreak of the fifth wave, and the antibodies of children and adults after infection have fallen to very low levels, which are not enough to protect them from another COVID-19 infection and the subsequent risk of severe diseases and complications.

Once again, we would like to appeal to parents to bring their children to complete the COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible, especially children with impaired immune systems or long-term illnesses. Children's awareness of personal hygiene and their ability to comply with infection prevention measures are low, and there is a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission and infection among them. COVID-19 vaccination can effectively reduce the chances of children widely disseminating the virus after infection. In addition, it can avoid the risk of acute complications, severe disease, death, and medium and long-term complications after recovery. We hope that parents will arrange for their children to complete the COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible, to strengthen their ability to resist the COVID-19 infection and give them the most comprehensive protection.

Detailed arrangements for recovering patients to complete the COVID-19 vaccination

Children or adults who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19 must complete the course of COVID-19 vaccination after recovering from COVID-19 infection. Taking 14 days after the positive test (rapid antigen test or nucleic acid test) as the date of recovery, COVID-19 vaccine can be administered one month after the date of recovery to boost the immunity against the SARS-CoV2 and protect children and adults from COVID-19 for a longer time, including the more infectious virus variants. The use of either the mRNA

vaccine (Comirnaty/BioNtech vaccine in Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR) or Inactivated virus vaccines (CoronaVac/SinoVac vaccine in Hong Kong SAR; SinoPharm vaccine in Macau SAR) vaccination as mean of protection is safe and effective.

For children, adolescents and adults whose first dose of COVID vaccine was received within 14 days before infection should receive the full course of vaccination as if they have not been vaccinated. Children, adolescents and adults whose second dose of COVID vaccine was received within 14 days before infection should receive vaccine as if they have received one dose of vaccine before infection. Children, adolescents and adults whose third dose of COVID vaccine was received within 14 days before infection should receive vaccine as if they have received two doses of vaccine before infection. For detailed information on the COVID-19 vaccination for recovered patients, please follow the guidelines of the Centre for Health Protection appended in the reference section below.

It is safe for an individual with a history of Covid-19 infection to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. If any individual or parent is not sure whether he or his child has been infected with COVID-19, he can directly receive COVID-19 vaccine and parent can bring his child for vaccination right away with no increased risk.

The Hong Kong Paediatric Society, the Macau Pediatric Society, The Hong Kong Society for Paediatric Immunology Allergy and Infectious Diseases, The Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Paediatric and Adolescent Dermatology Society, the College of Nursing Hong Kong, the Hong Kong College of Paediatric Nursing, the Hong Kong Paediatric Nurses Association and the Hong Kong Midwives Association would like to issue a joint statement here, appealing to children, adolescents and adults recovered from COVID-19 to receive COVID-19 vaccination to prevent severe illnesses and complications.”

27th September 2022

Reference:

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2. Factsheet on COVID-19 Vaccination for Persons with Prior COVID-19 Infection, Centre for Health Protection, Hong Kong SAR Government.
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3. COVID-19 Vaccination for Recovered Persons series 1
https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered_ENG.pdf
4. COVID-19 Vaccination for Recovered Persons series 2
https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered_2_ENG.pdf