

Why are COVID-19 vaccine booster shots controversial? | Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

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When the drugmaker Pfizer began a full-court press last month to get the US government to authorize COVID-19 vaccine booster shots, saying vaccine efficacy was fading after six months, US regulators and health officials balked. Federal agencies released a dry statement about the fully vaccinated not needing extra shots “at this time.” But other countries began to move forward, judging that research suggesting waning protection from the vaccines necessitated giving further shots to some in their populations. The United States is now behind places like Israel, which is already providing booster shots, but US officials are traveling down the same road as other wealthy countries: boosters are coming.

Many experts say the coronavirus vaccines still offer strong protection, even months after people started getting inoculated and even in the face of the more transmissible delta variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. While breakthrough infections are making headlines, the vaccines are still keeping many people from dying or ending up in the hospital.

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