# Article information:

Data Doesn’t Support New COVID-19 Booster Shots for Most, Says Vaccine Expert  
<https://www.yahoo.com/news/data-doesn-t-support-covid-230223656.html>

# Article summary:

1. Vaccine expert Dr. Paul Offit suggests that it may be time to rethink booster recommendations, as the bivalent Omicron BA.4/5 booster shot is not much more effective in generating virus-fighting antibodies than the original vaccine when used as a booster.

2. The immune system is trained against new viruses through a phenomenon called original antigenic sin, in which these immune cells continue to generate virus-fighting antibodies against the original pathogen even if more recent variants of the viruses vary from that template.

3. The CDC needs to provide more detailed data on who is being hospitalized for COVID-19 and their vaccination and booster status in order to determine who really needs to be boosted with the bivalent booster shot.

# Article rating:

May be slightly imbalanced: The article presents the information in a generally reliable way, but there are minor points of consideration that could be explored further or claims that are not fully backed by appropriate evidence. Some perspectives may also be omitted, and you are encouraged to use the research topics section to explore the topic further.

# Article analysis:

The article provides an interesting perspective on whether or not it is necessary to use a bivalent Omicron BA.4/5 booster shot for those who have already been vaccinated or infected with SARS-CoV-2, based on research conducted by two leading virologists—Dr. David Ho and Dr. Dan Barouch—which showed that when serum from people boosted with the bivalent Omicron booster was compared to that from people boosted with a dose of the original vaccine, their levels of neutralizing antibodies against BA.4/5 were comparable. Vaccine expert Dr. Paul Offit argues that chasing variants of the virus with new boosters may not always produce appreciably better responses in terms of antibody production, and suggests that it may be time to rethink booster recommendations for those who are not at high risk of getting severely ill due to COVID-19 (elderly and immunocompromised).

The article does a good job of presenting both sides of this argument, providing evidence from research conducted by two leading virologists as well as insights from Dr. Paul Offit’s perspective piece published in the New England Journal of Medicine, which supports his argument that chasing variants with new boosters may not always produce better results than using the original vaccine as a booster shot for those who are not at high risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 infection or vaccination. However, there are some points missing from consideration such as potential risks associated with using either type of vaccine (original vs bivalent) as a booster shot, possible biases in favor of one type over another, and how long immunity lasts after receiving either type of vaccine or boost shot before needing another one (if at all). Additionally, while it is noted that many people now have higher levels of protection from vaccines or having recovered from infections, there is no mention about how long this protection lasts before needing another boost shot or if any other factors can affect its efficacy over time (such as age). All these points should be considered before making any decisions about whether or not it is necessary to use a bivalent Omicron BA.4/5 booster shot for those who have already been vaccinated or infected with SARS-CoV-2

# Topics for further research:

* Risks associated with using original vs bivalent vaccine as a booster shot
* Biases in favor of one type of vaccine over another
* Duration of immunity after receiving original or bivalent vaccine or boost shot
* Factors affecting efficacy of vaccine or boost shot over time
* Long-term protection from vaccines or infection
* Impact of age on vaccine or boost shot efficacy

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