

Vaccines Approved in Canada

Two vaccines for COVID-19 have been approved by Health Canada: the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna vaccine.

- Both are classified as mRNA vaccines.
- Health Canada approved these vaccines as safe, effective and reliable.



Why should people choose to get the vaccine?

- Safe and reliable vaccines can help protect you and your family from COVID-19. They are an important tool to help stop the spread of the virus and allow individuals, families and workers to safely resume normal life.
- When a large percentage of the population becomes immune to COVID-19, the spread of the virus will slow down or stop. This is known as herd immunity.
- Vaccinated individuals can still be infected, but the vaccine greatly reduces the risk of infection and of the infection progressing to a more severe form of disease

Who can get the vaccine?

People who have no contraindications to the vaccine and are:

- Pfizer-BioNTech: age 16 or older
- Moderna: age 18 or older



Who is not recommended to receive the vaccine?

- Currently feeling unwell or have signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Anyone who has symptoms should be tested for COVID-19. Once well, then can be vaccinated.
- Children not in the authorized age group*
- Breastfeeding women*
- Women who are or could be pregnant*
 - If you are planning to become pregnant, delay this until at least 28 days have passed after receiving the second dose of the vaccine
- Allergies to the vaccine or its components
- Other serious allergic reaction (including anaphylaxis)
 - Speak to your health care provider prior to receiving the vaccine
- Immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment of autoimmune disorder
 - Speak to your health care provider prior to receiving the vaccine

*Children, breastfeeding women and pregnant women will be included in future clinical trials of the vaccine and may become eligible for the vaccine once concluded

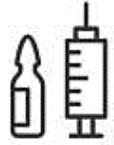
Can I receive the vaccine if I previously tested positive for COVID-19?

Yes. Only those with active illness are excluded from vaccination until they are well and have completed their isolation period.

Information Sheet COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

How is the vaccine administered?

The vaccine is injected into the deltoid muscle (upper shoulder). Two doses are required, spaced 21-28 days (Pfizer-BioNTech) or 28 days (Moderna) apart.



What happens after receiving the vaccine?

Everyone – vaccinated or not – must continue to follow all public health guidance (ie. hand hygiene, masking, physical distancing). Clinical trials have not yet shown that the vaccine reduces transmission from an asymptomatic carrier of COVID-19 to a non-immunized person.

If I have mild side effects from the first dose, should I get the second dose?

Yes. Mild side effects are common for all vaccines and typically resolve in a few days. It is important to receive both doses. Protection offered by the first dose is lower than the protection achieved after the second dose.

How long does it take until the vaccine is effective?

- Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine: maximum protection is achieved 7 days after the second dose.
- Moderna vaccine: maximum protection is achieved 14 days after the second dose.



Will the vaccine alter my DNA?

No. The vaccine does not affect, interact or alter DNA in any way. Our DNA resides in the nucleus of our cells and the mRNA does not travel into the nucleus. Therefore, there is no risk of altering DNA. It uses the body's natural defense response which breaks down and gets rid of the mRNA after it is finished using it.

Want detailed vaccine product information?

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Product Monograph

<https://covid-vaccine.canada.ca/info/pdf/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-pm1-en.pdf>

Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Product Monograph

<https://covid-vaccine.canada.ca/info/pdf/moderna-covid-19-vaccine-pm1.pdf>

More questions about vaccines?

Public Health Agency of Canada: *Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine: What you should know*

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines/moderna.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada: *Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine: What you should know*

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines/pfizer-biontech.html>