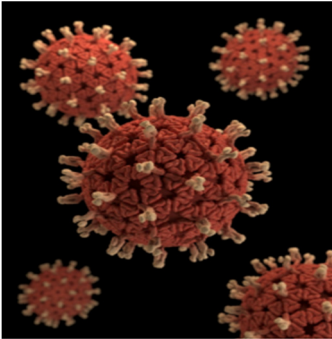


Fact Sheet for Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine & Moderna Vaccine

Plain Language Version



Vaccinations are very important to our health in Canada. They help us to get rid of or keep diseases under control. They help disease fighters (antibodies), in your body, to identify and fight bacteria and viruses that cause disease. Most people receive vaccines throughout their lives beginning when they are very young. Some vaccines must be received every year.

What are COVID-19 mRNA vaccines?

- These vaccines are used to prevent people from getting the COVID-19 virus. They teach our bodies to fight the virus by getting our bodies to produce antibodies. Antibodies keep us from being infected if the virus gets into our body. These vaccines **DO NOT** use the live COVID-19 virus.
- You can't get COVID-19 from these vaccines.
- Health Canada has approved two vaccines so far, commonly referred to as Pfizer and Moderna.
- They have approved them because they have proven that they are safe and can fight the virus. There may be other vaccines approved in the future that will be also be effective against COVID-19.
- They are very effective (90-95%) at least in the short term, in preventing COVID-19.
- The vaccine is injected into the upper arm.
- You need to get a shot twice for both vaccines, in order for them to work properly.

This resource was adapted from the COVID-19 Vaccine – Public Health Sheet on the Government of Manitoba vaccine resources website. The information is subject to change. Accurate as of Dec. 23/20



Who should get medical advice about getting the vaccines?

- They don't know yet if people who have already gotten COVID-19 will be helped by getting a vaccine. Right now, they are saying to wait at least three months after you have gotten COVID-19 and then talk to your doctor about whether you should get a vaccine or not.
- People who have autoimmune disorders (i.e. Celiac disease, Type 1 diabetes, Rheumatoid arthritis) or who have immune systems that are not working well due to something like cancer, need to talk to their doctor first before getting a vaccine. You can talk to them about the risks and benefits.
- People who are breastfeeding or pregnant should talk to their doctor before getting a vaccine.
- If you are highly allergic to something (you use an EpiPen) talk to your doctor before getting the vaccine.

Who should not get the vaccine?

- No one under the age of 16 should get the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.
- No one under the age of 18 should get the Moderna vaccine.
- If you have a severe allergic reaction to the first dose of the vaccine, do not get the second dose and talk to your doctor.
- If you are allergic to what is in the vaccine then don't get the shot. Talk to your doctor first if you aren't sure about allergies.
- These vaccines should not be given at the same time as other vaccines such as the flu vaccine. If you have just had another vaccine, wait for at least 14 days. After you have gotten your second dose of COVID-19 vaccine, wait at least 28 days before getting any other kind of vaccine.
- If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 do not get the vaccine. Go for a COVID test and talk to your health doctor about when you should get a vaccine.

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Side Effects:

- The side effects for these vaccines are quite a bit like the side effects for most common vaccines (i.e. the flu vaccine). They are usually mild or average and should go away in a couple of days. If they don't, go see your doctor.
- Potential common side effects are: pain, redness, swelling where the needle went into your arm, chills, feeling tired or like you have a fever, headache, muscle or joint pain, nausea or vomiting. If any of the symptoms happen after your vaccination you can try using acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (i.e. Advil). These side effects are not likely a risk to your health.
- If you would like to look at a full list of all possible side effects please go to www.manitoba.ca/vaccine or speak to your health care provider.
- As with any vaccine or other medication, serious side effects are possible (i.e. severe allergic reactions) but they are rare. Health Canada very carefully reviewed all the research about these vaccines and didn't identify any major safety concerns.
- Once you have had your vaccine shot, stay at the vaccine clinic for at least another 15 minutes just in case you have an allergic reaction like hives, problems breathing or swelling of the lips, tongue or throat. This kind of reaction can take up to one hour to happen so if this happens after you leave the clinic call 911 or go to an emergency room or health care center for immediate help.
- Please report any serious or unexpected bad reactions to the vaccine to a health care provider, or call Health Links-Info Sante at 204-788-8200 or toll free at 1-888-315-9257.

Getting ready for the vaccine:

- Follow all the signs/directions at the vaccine clinic and remember to stay home if you are sick.
- Wear a short sleeve shirt or sleeves that can be rolled up easily.

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- Make sure you have eaten well the day of your appointment.
- Bring and wear a mask.
- Bring your personal identification with you including your Manitoba health card.
- If you have one, bring your immunization record with you.
- After you get your vaccination you will still need to follow all the steps to keep yourself and other safe such as wearing a mask, washing your hands and staying at least 6 feet away from others.
- Right now, all vaccines are being given at Super Centers but that may change in the future. We aren't sure when you will be able to get your shot so please keep checking with your employer or go to <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html>

Immunization Records:

- All vaccinations are recorded in Manitoba's immunization registry. This lets health care providers know what immunizations you have had or what ones you may have missed. It also helps Manitoba Health and Seniors and public health to keep track of how well the vaccines are working.
- The Personal Health Information Act protects your information. You can choose to have your personal health information hidden from health care providers. To get more information about this, talk to your local health office or your health care provider.

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This document is available in alternative formats as needed. Please contact admin@abilitiesmanitoba.org for assistance.