



IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION

COVID-19 Vaccine



What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a viral infection. This virus can spread from person to person, mainly through tiny droplets in the air when someone coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes close to others.

People with COVID-19 can feel sick in different ways. Common symptoms include a fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, feeling very tired, or trouble breathing.



What is the COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccines use mRNA (messenger RNA) to deliver instructions for the body to make proteins (called antigens) like those found on the virus that causes COVID-19. These antigens trigger an immune response that helps the body build protection against COVID-19.

mRNA vaccines offer short term protection against COVID-19 infection and longer lasting protection against severe COVID-19 disease.

It takes approximately 14 days after receiving an mRNA vaccine for your immune system to respond; slightly longer if you are older or immunocompromised.



Who should receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for most people aged 6 months and older. The number of doses recommended depends on which vaccine you receive, your age, and your other risk factors.

- Most people aged 5 and older can get one initial dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine to be fully immunized.
- Those aged 6 months to 4 years need two doses if they have never been vaccinated against COVID-19 before.
- People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised need extra dose(s) as compared with others in their age group.
- Additional doses strengthen your protection against current strains of COVID-19 and boost your protection, as immunity decreases over time.
- For more information, check the website listed below or talk to your healthcare provider.



Who should NOT receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?

- People who have a bleeding disorder or are taking medication that could affect blood clotting.
- People who have had an anaphylactic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or any of its ingredients, or to another vaccine or injectable medication/product.
- People who have been diagnosed with multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) or adults (MIS-A).
- People who have been diagnosed with myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and/or pericarditis (inflammation of the sac around the heart) either in the past or after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

Please read other side.



**IMMUNIZATION
AFTERCARE**

COVID-19 Vaccine

People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.



What are the possible side effects from the influenza vaccine?

- As with any other vaccine, the most common side effects are soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site.
- Other side effects may include tiredness, headache, muscle and/or joint pain, nausea, vomiting, chills, fever, or enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands) in your underarm.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. Talk to your healthcare provider before using either of these medications as they are not recommended for people with certain medical conditions.

Call your healthcare provider if:

- A fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- A fever is 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher.
- A fever doesn't come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen are taken.
- The following symptoms occur:
 - » Weakness, drooping, or loss of feeling in the face, unexplained drooling, loss of taste on the front two-thirds of the tongue, inability to close eye on one side of the face.
 - » Trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, unexplained sweating or cough, feeling of fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Other illness or symptoms occur.



Questions?

If you have any questions about COVID-19 or the COVID-19 vaccine, please call your local Public Health office (see list of offices here: www.nshealth.ca/public-health) or your healthcare provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the following websites:

Nova Scotia Health Public Health
www.nshealth.ca/immunizations

Immunize Canada
immunize.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.canada.ca/public-health

Canadian Paediatric Society
cps.ca

811
811.novascotia.ca