

COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet

Why is there a new COVID-19 vaccine?

A new formulation of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine contains an XBB.1.5-variant of the COVID-19 virus. This new formulation is expected to provide a better immune response against currently circulating variants compared to vaccines previously used.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

COVID-19 vaccines will only be used in Newfoundland and Labrador if they are approved by Health Canada, and the evidence shows that they are safe, effective, of good quality, and demonstrate that the benefits of using it outweigh the risks. For more information on Health Canada's review process for COVID-19 vaccines, please see the [Government of Canada's website](#).

How do the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty and Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccines work?

This vaccine tells your body's cells to make "spike proteins" that are like those on the virus that causes COVID-19. These spike proteins do not cause COVID-19 and are removed from your body soon after they are formed. Your immune system will respond to the spike proteins by making antibodies that help to fight infection, if the COVID-19 virus gets into your body. The vaccine does not contain the virus and so it cannot give you COVID-19. The Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty and Moderna Spikevax vaccines have been tested to ensure they meet safety standards and have been licensed and approved by Health Canada.

What are the side effects of the vaccine?

Common side effects include redness, soreness and swelling at the injection site. Other possible side effects include chills, fatigue, joint pain, headache, fever and muscle aches. Symptoms typically resolve in 24-48 hours. If you develop symptoms after receiving your vaccine that persist, speak to your primary care provider.

Why is pericarditis/myocarditis a concern with some COVID-19 vaccines?

Myocarditis is inflammation of the heart muscle and pericarditis is inflammation of the lining around the heart. There have been very rare reports of myocarditis/pericarditis in Canada within the 12-29 age group when receiving certain COVID-19 vaccine products. Reported cases have been mild and individuals have recovered quickly. Speak to your health care provider if you fall within this age group and have concerns.

Who should not receive the vaccine?

You should not receive a COVID-19 vaccine if you have:

- a history of anaphylaxis after previous administration of any COVID-19 vaccine
- an immediate or anaphylactic hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine. To view components in each COVID-19 vaccine, refer to the product monographs for each product.
 - [Moderna Spikevax](#)
 - [Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty](#)
 - [Novavax Nuvaxovid](#)

If you have a fever or you are feeling unwell you should talk to a healthcare professional or defer your vaccine until you are feeling better, and your fever has resolved. If you have had a recent COVID-19 infection, it is recommended to wait six months before receiving another COVID-19 vaccine.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I had COVID-19?

It is possible that people will get COVID-19 before getting their COVID-19 vaccine. At the very least, people need to wait until they have fully recovered before getting their next dose. Public health recommends waiting 6 months after a known COVID-19 infection to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Please speak to your health care provider to get the best advice on when to get your next vaccine dose after a COVID-19 infection.