

### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Some of the more commonly reported symptoms include:

- sore throat
- runny nose
- sneezing
- new or worsening cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- temperature equal to or more than 38°C
- feeling feverish
- chills
- fatigue or weakness
- muscle or body aches
- new loss of smell or taste
- headache
- abdominal pain, diarrhea and vomiting
- feeling very unwell

### What severe complications are associated with COVID-19?

While most people recover fully, COVID-19 may lead to more severe and life-threatening illnesses requiring hospitalization and/or even death.

### What is the best way to prevent COVID-19?

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to protect against COVID-19. Evidence indicates that the vaccines used in Canada are very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19.

*Clean, Cover, and Contain* is always a good message to help prevent respiratory diseases. Clean your hands, cover your coughs and sneezes and contain your illness by staying home to rest.

### Who should receive COVID-19 vaccine?

All individuals aged 6 months and older, regardless of prior vaccination status, are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination in Fall 2025.

Vaccination is strongly recommended for those at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 or severe illness, including:

- Adults 65+
- Residents of long-term care or senior congregate living settings
- Individuals with [underlying medical conditions](#), including children with complex needs
- Pregnant individuals
- People from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities
- Members of racialized or equity-denied groups
- Health care workers and caregivers

A second dose, spaced at least 3 months after the first, is recommended for:

- Adults 80+
- Residents of long-term care
- Individuals 6 months and older who are [moderately to severely immunocompromised](#)

Adults 65–79 may also receive a second dose based on individual risk and clinical judgment.

For previously vaccinated individuals, a minimum interval of 3 months between COVID-19 vaccine doses is recommended.

The following guidelines are recommended for those not previously vaccinated against COVID-19:

- Children aged 6 months to under 5 years are recommended to receive two doses of Moderna vaccine, given eight weeks apart.
- Children aged 6 months to under 5 years who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, are recommended to receive 3 doses of Moderna vaccine, given four to eight weeks apart.
- Children 5 – 11 years of age who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, are recommended to receive 2 doses of Moderna vaccine, given four to eight weeks apart (a third dose can be considered for this age group, based on clinical discretion of care provider).
- Those 12 years and older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are recommended to receive 2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, given four to eight weeks apart (a third dose can be considered for this age group, based on clinical discretion of care provider).

### **Who should NOT receive COVID-19 vaccine?**

- People with moderate or severe acute illness.
- People with a known allergy to any component of the vaccine.
- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose.
- Infants less than 6 months of age.

### **What are the side effects of COVID-19 vaccine?**

All influenza vaccines are very safe. People who receive an injection may get a sore arm (redness, swelling and tenderness), others may have a fever, headache or muscle aches but these are mild and only last a day or two. Severe side effects and allergic reactions are rare. If you have other side effects, let your community/public health nurse know. You will be asked to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after you receive the influenza vaccine for observation.

### **Can I receive 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. 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.

### **Is COVID-19 vaccine safe?**

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective means for protection against disease. Vaccines offered in Newfoundland and Labrador through the publicly funded system are approved by Health Canada, and the evidence shows that they are safe, effective, of good quality, and demonstrates that the benefits of using it outweighs the risks. For more information on Health Canada's review process for COVID-19 vaccines, please see the [Government of Canada's website](#).