



ImmunizeBC

Evidence-based immunization information and tools for B.C. residents

COVID-19 Vaccine

BC residents can learn about the COVID-19 vaccine [here](#) and on the [BCCDC](#) and [BC government](#) sites.

COVID-19

FAQ about COVID-19 vaccines (</covid-19-vaccine-frequently-asked-questions>)

Adults: Managing needle fears (</adults-managing-needle-fears>)

COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions



([javascript:window.print\(\)](#))

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1. How will I know when and where I can get the vaccine? When will pre-registration for the COVID-19 vaccine open? What will be the process to get immunized?

When you can get the vaccine will depend on which demographic and phase you fit into. B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#phases>) will happen in four phases. The focus at first is to protect those most vulnerable to severe illness. Vaccination for the general population will begin in April and vaccines will primarily be distributed by age groups, in five-year increments, starting with the oldest.

Phase 1: December 2020 to February 2021 (current phase)

Residents, staff and essential visitors to long-term care and assisted-living residences.

Individuals assessed and awaiting a long-term care placement.

Health care workers providing care for COVID-19 patients in settings like Intensive Care Units, emergency departments, medical and surgical units, and paramedics.

Remote and isolated Indigenous communities.

Phase 2: February to March 2021

People not immunized in Phase 1:

Seniors, age 80 and over

Indigenous communities

Hospital staff, community general practitioners (GPs) and medical specialists

Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) seniors, age 65 and over, and Elders.

Populations living and working in select congregate settings.

Staff in community home support and nursing services for seniors.

Phase 3: April to June 2021

People aged 79 to 60, in five-year increments, for example:

79 to 75 (Dose 1 April, Dose 2 May)

64 to 60 (Dose 1 June, Dose 2 July)

People aged 69 to 16 who are clinically extremely vulnerable

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#clinically-vulnerable>) will be eligible between April and June.

Once additional vaccines are approved and become available, people between the ages of 18 and 64 who are front-line essential workers or work in high-risk workplaces or industries may be included in Phase 3.

Phase 4: July to September 2021

People aged 59 to 18, in five year increments, for example:

59 to 55 (Dose 1 July, Dose 2 August)

24 to 18 (Dose 1 and Dose 2 September)

The scheduling of groups for vaccination may change based on vaccine availability and transmission. This information is on the BCCDC eligibility page. (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/eligibility>)

Immunization clinics

Immunization clinics are being organized in 172 communities in B.C and will be overseen by your local health authority. The clinics will be held at large centres including:

School gymnasiums

Arenas

Convention halls

Community halls

Mobile clinics in self-contained vehicles will be available for some rural communities and for people who are homebound due to mobility issues.

Immunization clinics details will be available before Phase 3 of B.C.'s Immunization Plan.

Starting in mid-to-late February, Health Authorities will be reaching out to seniors aged 80 years and older, Indigenous seniors aged 65 years and older, and Indigenous Elders to provide information on how to pre-register for immunization appointments.

Register to get immunized

The process to get immunized happens in three steps. We will be providing more details as it is available, including the website to pre-register and the phone number.

Step 1: Pre-registration

Pre-registration helps us book appointment reservations quickly and easily. When you pre-register, you select your preferred method of communication. This is how we will contact you to reserve a vaccine appointment.

Pre-registration opens March 2021.

There will be two options to pre-register: Online or by Phone

You can pre-register two to four weeks before you are eligible to reserve a vaccine appointment.

Eligibility is based on your phase and age, working backwards in five year increments.

Step 2: Appointment reservation

When you are contacted to reserve a vaccine appointment, you must:

Complete a pre-screening

Select a location, date and time

You can complete your appointment reservation online or by phone.

Step 3: Appointment day

Come prepared to your appointment and arrive a few minutes before your scheduled time. At the immunization clinic you will:

Complete a check-in process

Get your vaccine dose

Wait in an observation area for about 15 minutes

Getting the second dose

People who get their first vaccine dose will be notified by email, text or phone call when they are eligible to book an appointment for their second dose.

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

2. I have a disease/illness that makes me more at-risk for COVID-19. Will I get the vaccine before others? When can I expect to get the vaccine?

B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan will happen in four phases. The focus of Phase 1 and Phase 2 is protecting those most vulnerable to severe illness from COVID-19. The scientific data indicates that age is the most important factor in determining the risk for severe illness. However, in phase 3, people who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable who are between ages 69 and 16 will be prioritized.

People with underlying health conditions that are clinically extremely vulnerable

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#clinically-vulnerable>) include:

- Solid organ transplant recipients

- People with specific cancers:

 - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy

 - People with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy

 - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment

 - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer

 - People having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors

 - People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last six months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs

People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)

People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection (biologic modifiers, high dose steroids, AZT, cyclophosphamide)

People who had their spleen removed

Adults with very significant developmental disabilities that increase risk

Adults on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)

Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired

Significant neuromuscular conditions requiring respiratory support

To learn more about the different phases and their timelines, check the BCCDC eligibility page (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/eligibility>) for more information on these groups.

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

3. I am recovering from an illness and/or my partner is recovering from an illness (like shingles or chickenpox). When will it be safe for me to get the vaccine?

In general, is safe for you to get the COVID-19 vaccine, even if you are recovering from an illness (e.g., shingles), but:

If you have a new illness preventing you from performing your regular activities, you should wait to get immunized until you have recovered. This will help to distinguish potential side effects of the vaccine from worsening of your other illness.

Also, waiting, till you are recovered from an infectious illness like chickenpox (an illness that can spread from person to person) ensures that you're not putting others at risk of infection when you come for your vaccine.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should stay home from the vaccine clinic and use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) to determine if you need to be tested.

4. Is it ok to get other vaccinations around the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine? Can I get a different vaccination in between doses of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Please speak with your immunization provider if you had another vaccine in the past 14 days. While there are no medical concerns to prevent you from receiving a COVID-19 vaccine if you recently received another immunization, attempts should be made to schedule other vaccines at least 14 days prior to COVID-19 vaccination or 28 days after your two doses of COVID-19 vaccination.

We want to protect those at the highest risk of severe disease as soon as possible. While COVID-19 disease is spreading in our communities, we don't want to leave someone who is eligible unvaccinated.

5. Can I get my 2nd dose earlier? Does the COVID-19 vaccine still work if there is a longer time between doses?

The time between the two doses of COVID-19 mRNA vaccines recommended by the manufacturer is 21 or 28 days. You should not get a second dose sooner than that. There is good evidence that in the short term, one dose of the vaccine provides very high protection that lasts for weeks. A second dose ensures stronger and longer lasting protection. In general, extending the time between first and second doses does not reduce vaccine protection over the long term and for most vaccines, a slightly longer interval is better.

The World Health Organization and the Canadian National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html>) support up to 42 days between doses, and other jurisdictions are using a longer time between doses, up to 12 weeks. This allows a greater number of people to receive the important protection from a first dose of vaccine, given limited vaccine supply currently and high rates of COVID-19 transmission.

In B.C., while vaccine supplies are limited, the time between first and second dose will be extended so more people can receive their first dose, increasing the benefit of limited vaccine supplies.

Learn more about the evidence and the decision to defer the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine in B.C. (http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID-19_vaccine/Public_health_statement_deferred_second_dose.pdf)

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

6. I think I am in a priority group in the future. How will I know if I can get vaccinated?

When you can get the vaccine will depend on which phase you fit into. Everyone who would like a vaccine and who is eligible to receive one will have the opportunity to be vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone living in B.C. who is eligible to receive it.

B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan will happen in four phases. The focus at first is to protect those most vulnerable to severe illness. This is happening from now until the end of March as vaccines are being delivered regularly throughout the province of B.C. After phase 1 and 2, immunization begins in the general population. Vaccines will primarily be distributed by age, starting with the oldest. People with certain underlying conditions will also be included.

Learn about the four phases of the COVID-19 Immunization Program

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#phases>) .

The scheduling of groups for vaccination may change based on vaccine availability and transmission.

7. My job puts me at higher risk of getting COVID-19, but it's not listed in the first phases. Will I get the vaccine earlier than other people?

BC is currently receiving limited numbers of vaccines, so these doses are being prioritized for people who are at risk of serious health complications or are more likely to spread the virus to at-risk individuals.

However, certain jobs have been identified as being at increased risk, and are being prioritized in different phases. Read about the 4 phases. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#phases>)

In the later part of Phase 3, once additional vaccines are approved and become available, people between the ages of 18 and 64 who are front-line essential workers or work in specific workplaces or industries may be included.

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

8. Was the development of the COVID-19 vaccines rushed or pushed through? Do we really know it's safe?

There are a few ways to answer this, but in all cases, the conclusion that the medical and scientific community has made is that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe.

The medical and scientific community is confident in the vaccine's safety, because of the track record of Canada (and B.C.'s) vaccine approval and safety monitoring system. While it's true that normally vaccines take an average of 10 years to approve, this is because of several factors, most of which have nothing to do with the actual science. One obvious factor is funding - often, scientists have to look for funding after each phase in the development of a vaccine. This delays the work for years. In other words, rather than being able to pursue science, usually scientists take long pauses looking for funding. In the case of the COVID-19 vaccine, this was not an issue.

Another reason that vaccine approvals take very long is again tied to funding but in a different way. Normally, the 3 different trial phases are done one at a time, because they don't usually have the funding to conduct them all at once. Instead, this time all three phases were done at the same time with the help of volunteers and sufficient funding. Again, this means that the end data and safety tests are exactly the same as other vaccines that have been approved in Canada. It just took less time. In short, Canada's system has proven time and again that the data necessary to get through the approval process is sufficient to prove safety, even for the long-term. Learn more about how B.C. will monitor vaccine uptake, safety and effectiveness. (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/monitoring-vaccine-uptake-safety-and-effectiveness>)

9. I've had reactions to a vaccine before. Is it safe for me to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Nearly everyone will be able to safely receive the vaccine, although a very small number of people may need to avoid vaccination due to severe allergies (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/getting-a-vaccine#allergies>) to parts of the vaccine. While the vaccine manufacturers identify a number of precautions because these populations were not included in the original vaccine trials, in the context of the ongoing risk of COVID-19, most individuals can be offered vaccination.

If you've had a reaction to a specific vaccine, try looking at the ingredient list (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>) and see if any of the same ingredients are in the COVID-19 vaccine. Most importantly, make sure that your healthcare provider knows about all of your allergies before you get any vaccine.

There are very few reasons someone should not get the COVID-19 vaccine. You should not get the vaccine if you:

- have serious allergies to any of the ingredients in the vaccines. An ingredient in the vaccines that have been associated with a rare but serious allergy (anaphylaxis) is polyethylene glycol (PEG). PEG can be found in some cosmetics, skincare products, laxatives, some processed foods and drinks and other products.

- have had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or to any part of the vaccine.

Talk to your health care provider if you have had an anaphylactic reaction but do not know the cause.

10. What are the ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccines?

There are currently two vaccines approved in Canada, so we can only speak to the ingredients in these vaccines.

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

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

As more vaccines are approved, their ingredient lists will be available on this Health Canada COVID-19 vaccine page. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>)

11. How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines? How long does the immunity to COVID-19 last after getting the vaccine?

Both vaccines are about 95 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 after receiving two doses. Protection, beginning 14 days after one dose of either vaccine, is greater than 90 percent. The duration of protection is not yet known for one or two doses of the vaccine but is being actively monitored. In general, some vaccines provide lifelong immunity, while others such as tetanus only work for 10 years.

We don't currently know how long immunity from the COVID-19 vaccines lasts, but the research is ongoing. COVID-19 vaccine trial participants continue to be monitored so we will learn more. However, we do know that right now we can safely reduce the risks of COVID-19 disease by getting vaccinated.

The degree to which these vaccines protect against COVID-19 one or two years after vaccination will be determined in the future, and public health experts will recommend whether booster shots are needed as we get more information.

12. Once I'm vaccinated, do I still have to worry about public health measures like wearing a mask and social distancing?

Everyone who receives the vaccine will still need to follow public health guidance and follow orders from the Provincial Health Officer. After you get a vaccine, it will still be extremely important to continue to practice all the preventive measures that have been recommended, including washing your hands, maintaining a safe physical distance, wearing a mask, and staying home when sick. There are several reasons this is important:

It takes about 2 weeks for your body to gain protection from the COVID-19 vaccine. This means that if you contracted COVID-19 before getting the vaccine, or within the 2 week period following the vaccine, you may still get sick from COVID-19. So if you experience symptoms of COVID-19 after you've been vaccinated, use the BC self-assessment tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) to determine if you need to be tested.

The vaccine won't stop everyone from getting COVID-19. For those who do get the virus, it is less likely you will experience severe illness.

The vaccine is 95% effective, but you could be in the 5% that don't have immunity. You can still spread COVID-19 if you touch things and don't wash your hands or interact with people in close proximity.

After receiving your COVID-19 vaccine, be sure to keep a copy of your immunization record. By registering for Health Gateway (<https://www.healthgateway.gov.bc.ca/>), you will be able to access a digital copy of your COVID-19 vaccine record. The Health Gateway is a single place for BC residents to access their health records.

As things change, public health measures will be updated and adjusted. It is important to keep following public health recommendations.

13. I live with someone who is vulnerable and is in one of the first vaccination phases. Can I get the vaccine at the same time as them?

As of right now, B.C. has a limited number of vaccines. For the first phases, the vaccines have been reserved for only those who fall directly into the priority groups.

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

14. I have mild to severe allergies (but not to PEG) - is the COVID-19 vaccine safe? What if I have allergies to antibiotics or other medicines?

There is a lot of misinformation out there that anyone with any allergies whatsoever should not get the vaccine. This is not the case. Nearly everyone will be able to safely receive the vaccine, although a very small number of people may need to avoid vaccination due to severe allergies (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/getting-a-vaccine#allergies>) to parts of the vaccine. While the vaccine manufacturers identify a number of precautions because these populations were not included in the original vaccine trials, in the context of the ongoing risk of COVID-19, most individuals can be offered vaccination.

Look at the 2 mRNA COVID-19 vaccine ingredient lists (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>) and see if you are allergic to any part of the COVID-19 vaccines. Most importantly, make sure that your healthcare provider knows about your allergies before you get any vaccine. There are very few reasons someone should not get the COVID-19 vaccine.

You should not get the vaccine if you:

- have serious allergies to any of the ingredients in the vaccines. An ingredient in the vaccines that has been associated with a rare but serious allergy (anaphylaxis) is polyethylene glycol

(PEG). PEG can be found in some cosmetics, skincare products, laxatives, some processed foods and drinks and other products.

have had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or to any part of the vaccine.

Talk to your health care provider if you have had an anaphylactic reaction but do not know the cause

We should also point out serious allergic reactions to vaccines (anaphylaxis) are extremely rare - much rarer than people assume. Most healthcare providers go their whole career without seeing one case. On top of that, anaphylaxis is preventable in many cases and treatable in all cases. All immunizing healthcare providers in BC are required to be trained and actively watch for and treat anaphylaxis immediately.

15. What are the common side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine? If I have a side effect do I need to report it?

It is normal and expected to have common reactions after you receive the COVID-19 vaccine. These do not need to be reported. Please read about the common expected reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine in the BCCDC vaccine aftercare sheet (http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%202%20-%20Imms/Part4/COVID-19_Vaccine_After_Care_Sheet.pdf) .

Common side effects:

May include pain, redness, swelling and itchiness where the vaccine was given.

Some people experience local injection site reactions within 1-2 days after the vaccine, and other people experience local injection site reactions starting a week or more after they get the vaccine.

Local injection site reactions are a normal part of your body's immune response to the vaccine and will resolve within a few days. A cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack where the vaccine was given may help.

These local injection reactions will go away on their own; however you may feel unwell for a day or two. If you are unable to carry on with your regular activities because of these symptoms,

you can take medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). Check with your health care provider if you need advice about medication.

Other side effects may include:

Tiredness, headache, fever, chills, muscle or joint soreness, nausea and vomiting.

These side effects will go away on their own; however you may feel unwell for a day or two. If you are unable to carry on with your regular activities because of these side effects, you can take medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). Check with your health care provider if you need advice about medication.

COVID-19 vaccine side effects vs. COVID-19 symptoms

The vaccine is not a live virus vaccine, and cannot cause COVID-19.

Some of the side effects of the vaccine are similar to symptoms of COVID-19 infection. However, side effects from the vaccine should only last a day or two and go away on their own.

Symptoms such as cough or other respiratory symptoms are not side effects of the vaccine and are more likely to be due to a respiratory infection like COVID-19. Use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) if you experience any symptoms compatible with COVID-19 infection, including respiratory symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, etc.) or any symptoms listed above, with the exception of local injection site reactions. This will let you know if you need to get tested for COVID-19.

Reporting adverse events following immunization

If you have concerns about any symptoms you develop after receiving the vaccine, speak with your healthcare provider or call 8-1-1 for advice. To report a potential adverse event following immunization with the COVID-19 vaccine, contact the immunization provider that gave you the COVID-19 vaccine. You can also contact your local health unit (<https://immunizebc.ca/finder>) and ask to speak to a public health nurse.

16. Do I have to go to a clinic to get vaccinated, or can they come to me? Will there be mobile clinics for people with

accessibility issues or people who live in remote areas?

Currently, there are limited locations across B.C. that are administering COVID-19 vaccines. As we move into more phases, more immunization clinics are being added. Immunization clinics are being organized in 172 communities in B.C and will be overseen by your local health authority. More immunization clinic details will be available before Phase 3 of B.C.'s Immunization Plan.

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#phases>) The clinics will be held at large centres including:

- School gymnasiums

- Arenas

- Convention halls

- Community halls

Mobile clinics in self-contained vehicles will be available for some rural communities and for people who are homebound due to mobility issues.

Starting in mid-to-late February, Health Authorities will be reaching out to seniors aged 80 years and older, Indigenous seniors aged 65 years and older, and Indigenous Elders to provide information on how to pre-register for immunization appointments. We will be providing an update on this process in the coming weeks.

Please note that the circumstances around COVID-19 vaccines in BC are changing regularly, so this information may change.

17. Are there long-term side effects caused by mRNA COVID-19 vaccines? How do we know?

While it's difficult to definitively say whether or not there are long-term side-effects, the medical and scientific community is confident in the long-term safety of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.

According to the USA Centers for Disease Control (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html>), "Researchers have been studying and working with mRNA vaccines for decades. mRNA vaccines have been studied before for flu, Zika, rabies, and cytomegalovirus (CMV). As soon as the necessary information about the virus that causes COVID-19 was available, scientists began designing the mRNA instructions for cells to build the unique spike protein into an mRNA vaccine." In addition, cancer research has used mRNA to trigger the immune system to target specific cancer cells. Decades of studying mRNA have shown no long-term side-effects.

According to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (<https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/making-vaccines/prevent-covid>), the vaccine is not expected to have long-term negative effects for a few reasons:

First, most negative effects occur within 6 weeks of receiving a vaccine, which is why the FDA asked the companies to provide 8 weeks of safety data after the last dose.

Second, the mRNA in the vaccine breaks down pretty quickly because our cells need a way to stop mRNA from making too many proteins or too much protein.

But, even if for some reason our cells did not break down the vaccine mRNA, the mRNA stops making the protein within about a week, regardless of the body's immune response to the protein.

In addition, the medical and scientific community is confident in the vaccine's long-term safety, because of the track record of Canada's vaccine approval and B.C.'s safety monitoring system. Overall, this means that the end data and safety tests are exactly the same as other vaccines that have been approved in Canada. The safety monitoring system in Canada happens both passively and actively.

Passive safety monitoring happens when anyone with a significant reaction to any vaccine reports it to their healthcare provider which is then reported to the BCCDC, Health Canada and all the way up to the World Health Organization. This information is shared globally in a timely way to flag for other countries any emerging and urgent concerns.

An example of active safety monitoring is the nurses across Canada who are actively reviewing patients' charts as part of the IMPACT (Immunization Monitoring Program ACTIVE) (<https://www.cps.ca/impact>). This is a pediatric hospital-based national active surveillance network for adverse events in children following immunization, vaccine failures and selected infectious diseases that are, or will be, vaccine-preventable.

Canada's system has proven time and again that the data necessary to get through the approval process is sufficient to prove safety, even for the long-term.

18. How long after COVID-19 is it safe to get vaccinated? I had COVID-19 but now I am feeling better. Should I still get vaccinated?

People who are sick with COVID-19 should wait until they have recovered from acute illness and public health has told them they no longer need to isolate. It is important that you wait the full isolation period before getting the vaccine so that you do not expose people at your vaccination clinic to the virus.

If you had COVID-19 you should still get the vaccine once you have recovered. This is because you may not be immune to the virus that causes COVID-19 and you could get infected again. However, as vaccine quantities are currently limited, those who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last three months are expected to have protection for the short term and can have their COVID-19 vaccination deferred.

19. Do people who are pregnant, trying to get pregnant, or breastfeeding have safety concerns with the vaccine?

The Canadian Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (SOGC)

([https://sogc.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Covid%20Information/SOGC_Statement_COVID-](https://sogc.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Covid%20Information/SOGC_Statement_COVID-19_Vaccination_in_Pregnancy.pdf)

[19_Vaccination_in_Pregnancy.pdf](https://sogc.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Covid%20Information/SOGC_Statement_COVID-19_Vaccination_in_Pregnancy.pdf)), the National Advisory Committee on Immunization

([https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html#a7)

[naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html#a7](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html#a7)) and public health experts in B.C. all advise that

pregnant and breastfeeding women can be offered the vaccine. If you have questions, and you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or are breastfeeding, speak to your health care provider about COVID-19 vaccines.

20. Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am immunocompromised from treatment or illness? What if I have an autoimmune disease?

Nearly everyone will be able to safely receive the vaccine, although a very small number of people may need to avoid vaccination due to severe allergies (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/getting-a-vaccine#allergies>) to parts of the vaccine. Vaccine manufacturers identify a number of precautions because these populations were not included in the original vaccine trials. In the context of the ongoing risk of COVID-19, most individuals can be offered vaccination:

Weakened immune systems. COVID-19 vaccines are not live vaccines, and there are no significant concerns about safety for those with weakened immune systems. It is possible that the vaccine may not work as expected in people who have a weakened immune system. If you have questions and have a weakened immune system, speak to your healthcare provider about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Autoimmune diseases. If you have questions and have an autoimmune disease, speak to your healthcare provider or medical specialist.

Didn't find what you were looking for? Find more answered questions in the "Ask Us" category for the COVID-19 vaccine (<https://immunizebc.ca/question-categories/covid-19-vaccine>)

Date last updated: Thursday, Feb 18, 2021

Date last reviewed: Thursday, Feb 18, 2021

Vaccines by Disease

COVID-19

FAQ about COVID-19 vaccines

Adults: Managing needle fears

Chickenpox

Diphtheria

Hib

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis B

HPV

FAQ about HPV vaccines

Influenza

FAQ about influenza vaccines

Measles

Meningococcal

Mumps

Pertussis

Pneumococcal

Polio

Rotavirus

Rubella

Shingles

Tetanus

Find a health unit

Ask a question

Vaccination scheduler tool