VACCINE INFORMATION AND AFTER CARE

Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines for Adults/Adolescents Aged 12 and Up

Please read this carefully and ensure a health care provider answers your questions before getting the vaccine.

How Does the COVID vaccine prevent COVID-19?

The vaccine causes our body to produce protection (such as antibodies) to help keep us from becoming sick if we are exposed to the COVID-19 virus. You cannot get a COVID-19 infection from the vaccine.

Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) which triggers a response to help our body protect itself against the virus. Vaccines like Pfizer and Moderna offer a high level of protection against COVID-19 severe disease.

Either mRNA vaccine can be given for your primary series or booster doses. An mRNA vaccine is preferred as a second dose vaccine for those who received AstraZeneca for their first dose because of the possibility of a better immune response and safety of mixed vaccine schedules.

It takes approximately 14 days after receiving the first dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccines to develop immunity to COVID-19; it may take slightly longer in older individuals. Completing your primary series and receiving any booster doses for which you are eligible helps prevent severe disease.

Who can get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Most people require two doses of an mRNA vaccine to complete their primary series.

When to cancel and rebook your vaccine appointment

Cancel and rebook your vaccine appointment using the link on your emailed vaccine appointment confirmation if you tested positive or have symptoms that could be COVID-19.

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan

Updated June 1, 2022

While the use of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is preferred for individuals younger than 30 years of age, Moderna COVID-19 vaccine may be used as an alternative to Pfizer for persons in this age group who are moderately to severely immunocompromised after discussion with their healthcare provider. Moderately to severely immunocompromised individuals are eligible for a three-dose mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary series and are also eligible for a booster dose.

Longer intervals between doses have been shown to result in a better immune response and somewhat better vaccine effectiveness than shorter intervals. However, older people appear to have faster waning immunity compared to younger people.

Emerging evidence shows an increased immune response and vaccine effectiveness compared to a primary series in adults following a booster dose. Emerging evidence in adolescents suggest the protection against symptomatic Omicron infection wanes over time, however protection against severe disease appears to be maintained.

First booster doses are available for the following populations:

Adults aged 18 to 69 and adolescents aged 12 to 17,* 168 days after primary series completion
- Pregnant individuals, 5 months after primary series completion
- Adults aged 70 and older or who are residents of long-term care or senior congregate living settings, 120 days after primary series completion
- Adults in or from First Nations communities who are 55 years of age or older 120 days after primary series completion
- Individuals aged 12 and older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised 120 days after primary series completion

* NACI strongly recommends adolescents aged 12-17 who may be at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 due to medical and/or social risk factors receive a booster dose.
NACI recommends that a booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine may be offered 168 days after completion of a primary COVID-19 series to all adolescents aged 12 to 17 in light of ongoing COVID-19 activity.
Important Information about Myocarditis and Pericarditis
for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines for Adults/Adolescents Aged 12 and Up

Please read this carefully and ensure a health care provider answers your questions before getting the vaccine.

Preliminary safety data from boosters in adolescents showed no additional safety concerns beyond those noted after receiving the first two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, which includes a rare risk of myocarditis and pericarditis following vaccination. Health Canada has not approved the use of a COVID-19 booster dose for people under 18 years of age at this time.

**Myocarditis and Pericarditis**

There have been rare cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining around the heart) following vaccination with Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines reported in Canada and internationally.

This occurs more frequently in males, persons less than 30 years of age, and following the second dose. Some data suggests that this occurs less frequently if there is a longer interval between the first and second dose.

Data on the rare risk of myocarditis and/or pericarditis following a booster dose of an mRNA vaccine in adolescents 12 to 17 years of age are still emerging.

**Symptoms of Myocarditis/Pericarditis can include:**
- shortness of breath
- chest pain or pressure
- unexplained sweating
- cough
- the feeling of a rapid or an abnormal heart rhythm
- swelling in the ankles and feet

Most cases have occurred within a week of receipt of the vaccine. If you develop any of these symptoms, please seek immediate medical attention and make sure you mention you have received the vaccine.

Most of these cases, although hospitalized are relatively mild and recover well with rest and treatment of symptoms.

Myocarditis can also occur as a complication in people who are infected with COVID-19.

There are no data yet on myocarditis/pericarditis using a mixed vaccine schedule (for example, AstraZeneca as dose 1 and Pfizer as dose 2).

Second Booster Doses:
The following groups are eligible to receive a second booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine **120 days** following their last dose of COVID-19 vaccine:
- Adults aged 70 years and older.
- Adult residents of long-term care and senior congregate living settings.
- Adults in or from First Nations communities who are 55 years of age or older

This includes individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised and belong to one of the populations eligible for a second booster.

Data on the use of second booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine is emerging. Early evidence shows that a second booster dose provides additional protection against COVID-19 compared to a first booster dose. Longer intervals between doses have been shown to result in a better immune response and somewhat better vaccine effectiveness than shorter intervals. However older people appear to have faster waning immunity compared to younger people.

The duration of protection offered by a second booster dose is currently unknown. Health Canada has not approved the use of a second booster dose at this time. Data show that there have been no notable differences in side effects following a second booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

For more information, please visit [novascotia.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/#boosterdoses](novascotia.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/#boosterdoses).

Updated June 1, 2022

For information visit: [novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan](novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan)
As a precautionary measure NACI recommends that people who have experienced myocarditis with or without pericarditis (with an abnormal cardiac investigation) should wait to receive further doses of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.

**National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Recommendations:**

NACI recommends most individuals 12 to 29 years old receive Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as their first two doses eight weeks apart due to the lower reported rate of myocarditis/pericarditis following the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine compared to Moderna (full dose).

People previously diagnosed with myocarditis or pericarditis who are no longer followed by a medical professional should receive mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.

People with a history compatible with pericarditis and who either had no cardiac workup or had normal cardiac investigations, can receive subsequent doses of mRNA vaccine once they are symptom free and at least 90 days has passed since their first vaccination.

People who have a history of myocarditis not related to mRNA COVID-19 vaccination and are still being followed by a health care provider should consult their health care provider for individual considerations and recommendations. People who are no longer being followed clinically for cardiac issues following myocarditis should receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

After discussing the risks/benefits with their health care provider, some people with confirmed myocarditis with or without pericarditis following vaccination may choose to receive another dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. These individuals should choose Pfizer 30 mcg vaccine due to the lower reported rate of myocarditis with or without pericarditis following the Pfizer 30 mcg vaccine compared to the Moderna 100 mcg vaccine.

The risk of recurrence of myocarditis and/or pericarditis following additional doses of either mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in people with a history of confirmed myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a previous dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is unknown. People should seek immediate medical attention if symptoms develop.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization continues to strongly recommend that a complete COVID-19 mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) series should be offered to individuals who do not have contraindications to the vaccine. Both mRNA vaccines demonstrate high vaccine effectiveness particularly against severe disease.

The benefits of receiving COVID-19 vaccine outweigh the very small risk of myocarditis/pericarditis in people of all ages.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization and Health Canada in collaboration with provinces and territories, as well as international agencies and manufacturers continue to monitor the evidence and update recommendations as needed.

Please see: [Important Information about Myocarditis and Pericarditis](#)

**For information visit:** novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan
## Who can get the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines?

If you identify with any of the situations in the ★ MAY BE ABLE TO GET ★ column, you should discuss your personal risks of COVID-19 and potential benefits and risks of getting the vaccine with your doctor, nurse practitioner, specialist, clinic nurse or pharmacist familiar with your medical history before deciding whether getting the vaccine is right for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age: Modena vaccine: 18 years of age and older Pfizer vaccine: 12 years of age and older</th>
<th>CAN GET</th>
<th>MAY BE ABLE TO GET</th>
<th>SHOULD NOT GET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you received any COVID-19 vaccines while living in another province/country? If yes, please provide information to immunization provider.</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling unwell with symptoms that could be COVID-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have had a COVID-19 infection but: Could spread COVID-19 to others or still feel unwell from a recent infection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have completed their isolation period and are not feeling unwell from their recent infection: People who tested positive for COVID-19 and have not been fully vaccinated are advised to wait 2 months to get a first or second dose of vaccine. People who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have been fully vaccinated are advised to wait 3 months to get a booster dose, provided it has been the minimum interval based on age since their last dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Some people may choose to receive a vaccine dose after symptoms of COVID-19 have resolved and they are no longer infectious.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have received monoclonal antibodies for treatment of COVID-19 (Sotrovimab) Need to provide date when received to health care provider. Each situation will be decided on a case-by-case basis to ensure you receive protection from the vaccine.</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did you experience myocarditis or pericarditis after an immunization with a COVID-19 vaccine?</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should follow up with your healthcare provider before receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, if you have a history of myocarditis or pericarditis and are still followed by a physician for related heart issues.</td>
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<td>★</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding or pregnant: Currently or planning to become pregnant before getting your COVID-19 vaccine. If you answered “YES” to this question, please review the Pregnancy and Breastfeeding video.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Allergies:

- **Polyethylene glycol (PEG)**: Polyethylene glycol (PEG) can rarely cause allergic reactions. It is found in products such as medications, bowel preparation products for colonoscopy, laxatives, cough syrups, cosmetics, skin creams, dermal fillers, medical products used on the skin and during operations, and contact lens solution. Consultation with an allergist is recommended before you receive Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

- **Tromethamine (trometamol or Tris)**: is a component in contrast media, oral and parenteral medications. Consultation with an allergist is recommended before you receive Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

- **Had a severe reaction to a previous dose of COVID-19 vaccine, including allergic reaction. Consultation with an allergist is recommended before you receive Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.**

### Problems with immune system:

- Problems with your immune system from disease or treatment
- Autoimmune conditions

### Was vaccinated in the past 14 days (not a COVID-19 vaccine)

★

**In addition to the above information, tell the health care provider if:**

- You have fainted or felt faint after getting past vaccines or medical procedures. Your health care provider may recommend that you get the vaccine lying down to prevent fainting.
- You have a bleeding disorder or are taking medication that could affect blood clotting. This information will help the health care provider prevent bleeding or bruising from the needle.
- You have had an anaphylactic reaction to another vaccine or to an injectable medication or product. You can get the vaccine but will be observed in the clinic for 30 minutes after vaccination in case of an unexpected allergic reaction.

**Updated June 1, 2022**

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan
Pfizer and Moderna Vaccines
Everything you need to know before getting the COVID-19 vaccine

When should I return for my next dose?

It is very important to complete your primary series and receive the booster doses for which you are eligible for the vaccines to work well. For any doses after the first, you can receive either Pfizer or Moderna regardless of the first vaccine you were given.

Primary Series

Most individuals need 2 doses to complete their primary series. You may receive your second dose of mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) 8 weeks after you received your first dose.

Individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are recommended to receive 3 doses to complete their primary series. If you are moderately to severely immunocompromised, a vaccine schedule of 28 days between dose 1 and dose 2 and 56 days between dose 2 and dose 3 is recommended.

It is preferred to complete a COVID-19 vaccine series which was started with AstraZeneca with an mRNA vaccine like Pfizer or Moderna 8 weeks after the first dose. A mixed vaccine schedule may increase the risk of short-term side effects including headache, fatigue and feeling generally ill.

Booster Doses

Most individuals in Nova Scotia are eligible for a booster dose. Some individuals are eligible for a second booster dose. The interval between your last dose and your mRNA booster dose and the number of booster doses you are eligible to receive depends on factors like your age, or your living setting. For more information about when you are eligible for your booster dose, see novascotia.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/#boosterdoses

Tell the person providing the next dose if you experienced any side effects after previous doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

What should I do before coming to the clinic for my appointment?

Wear a short-sleeve shirt or top with sleeves that are easy to roll up.

Have something to eat before coming to the clinic to prevent feeling faint while being vaccinated. It is also important to drink water and stay hydrated.

It is strongly recommended that you bring a clean well fitted mask to wear while you are at the clinic.

Bring your Nova Scotia Health card if you have one.

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan
Pfizer and Moderna Vaccines

Everything you need to know after getting the COVID-19 vaccine

What should I do right after getting the vaccine?

- Stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting the vaccine. You may be asked to wait for 30 minutes if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy or allergy to another injectable medication.
- If you are asked to wait outside, let the health care provider at the clinic know if you do not have a warm, dry place to wait.
- Tell a health care provider at the clinic if you feel unwell while waiting. If waiting in your vehicle, honk your horn to get their attention.
- It is strongly recommended that you leave your mask on while inside the clinic.
- Use the hand sanitizer (alcohol-based hand rub) to clean your hands before leaving the clinic.

In rare cases, people can faint or have an allergic reaction after getting a vaccine.

Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:

- hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
- swelling of your face, tongue or throat
- or difficulty breathing

Clinic staff are prepared to manage these events if they happen.

Tell a health care provider at the clinic right away if you have any of these symptoms.

Serious side effects after getting the vaccine are rare. However, should you develop any serious symptoms that could be related to an allergic reaction, CALL 911 RIGHT AWAY.

Updated June 1, 2022

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan
What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine? What can I expect over the next few days?

People can have side effects in the two weeks after getting the vaccine with most of the common side effects occurring in the first few days.

Although these side effects are not serious, they may make you feel unwell for about one to three days. They will go away on their own.

Side effects are expected and can show the vaccine is working to produce protection in your body:

- Pain, swelling or redness where the needle was given. Place a cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack over where the vaccine was given.
- Tiredness, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, nausea, vomiting, chills, fever or enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands) in your underarm. Pain or fever medication (acetaminophen or ibuprofen) may relieve the pain or fever. Check with your healthcare provider if you need advice about medication.

Rarely Bell’s palsy (weakened or inability to move the muscles of the face) has been reported after mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. Seek medical attention right away if you experience facial weakness or drooping or other symptoms involving the face.

If you have any concerns about the symptoms you develop after getting the vaccine, including symptoms of myocarditis/pericarditis, contact your health care provider for advice. Tell the person providing the next dose about any side effects you experienced after previous dose(s).

Things to remember

Even after you have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and a booster dose if eligible, it is strongly recommended that you continue following public health measures to keep yourself and others safe.

- Wear a mask indoors
- clean your hands regularly
- stay home if you feel unwell

COVID-19 vaccines may be given at the same time as, or any time before or after other vaccines. A health care professional can help to determine the timing of COVID-19 vaccines.

Do not get a TB (tuberculin) test until 4 weeks after your COVID-19 vaccine.

Keep this sheet or other immunization record in a safe place.
If you have questions, call your health care provider or visit novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan.

Updated June 1, 2022