Important Information about Myocarditis and Pericarditis for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines

Please review the following information about the rare risk of myocarditis and pericarditis following immunization with mRNA vaccines.

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.

**Most cases have occurred in:**
- males,
- persons less than 30 years of age,
- following the second dose, and
- within a week of receipt of vaccine

Some data suggest that myocarditis/pericarditis occurs less frequently if there is a longer interval between the first and second doses of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is strongly recommended for people 18 to 29 years of age for their first, second or booster dose. The Pfizer 30 COVID-19 vaccine is available for use in adolescents 12 to 17 years of age. Evidence shows there is a rare but increased risk of myocarditis/ pericarditis in people under 30 years of age from Moderna vaccine as compared to Pfizer vaccine.

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.

Initial data suggest that the risk of myocarditis and pericarditis in 5-11 year olds following COVID-19 mRNA vaccination appears to be lower in this age group than in adolescents and adults.

**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

If you develop any of these symptoms, please seek immediate medical attention and make sure you mention you have received the vaccine.

Reported cases of myocarditis and pericarditis following vaccination with mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, although hospitalized, are relatively mild and recovered well with rest and treatment of symptoms.

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

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan

Updated Feb. 9, 2022
Important Information about Myocarditis and Pericarditis for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines

Please review the following information about the rare risk of myocarditis and pericarditis following immunization with mRNA vaccines.

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.

However, 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 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 a 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.

Some people with confirmed myocarditis with or without pericarditis following vaccination may choose to receive another dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine after discussing the risks and benefits with their healthcare provider. For these individuals, when choosing another dose of vaccine, it should be the 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.

NACI will continue to review and monitor the evidence on COVID-19 vaccination following myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine as it emerges and will update their recommendations as needed.

There are many potential causes for myocarditis and pericarditis. Myocarditis can also occur as a complication in people who are infected with COVID-19.

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

For information visit: novascotia.ca/vaccine-plan

Updated Feb. 9, 2022