

COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet Pfizer / BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine (COVID-19 mRNA vaccine)

Please read this information sheet carefully and ensure all your questions have been answered by a health care provider before receiving the vaccine.

What is COVID-19?

- COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes COVID-19 is mainly passed from an infected person to others when the infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks or breathes. It is important to note that infected people can spread the infection even if they have no symptoms.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 can include cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, tiredness and loss of smell or taste. Some people infected with the virus have no symptoms at all, while others have symptoms that range from mild to severe.

How does the Pfizer / BioNTech vaccine protect against 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. The vaccine uses a new method called messenger RNA (mRNA) to help our body make protection against the virus.
- The vaccine was shown to work very well at preventing people from becoming sick with COVID-19. The immunized group of people was much less likely (95% less likely) to become sick with COVID-19 in the weeks after vaccination compared to the group that did not receive the vaccine.

Who should receive the COVID-19 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine?

- Those individuals 16 years of age and older without contraindications
- A complete COVID-19 vaccine series may be offered to the following individuals in the authorized age group if a risk assessment deems that the benefits outweigh the potential risks for the individual, and if informed consent includes discussion about the absence of evidence on the use of COVID-19 vaccine in these populations:
 - Immune suppressed people (due to disease or treatment)
 - Those with an auto-immune disorder
 - Pregnant or breastfeeding women
 - Children 12 to 15 years of age*

*A complete vaccine series of vaccine may be offered to individuals 12-15 years of age who are at very high risk of severe outcomes of COVID-19 (e.g., due to a pre-existing medical condition known to be associated with increased risk of hospitalization or mortality) and are at increased risk of exposure (live in a congregate care facility).

Who should not receive the COVID-19 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine at this time?

- This vaccine **should not** be offered to the following groups with contraindications, including the following:
 - If you have had a serious or allergic reaction to your last COVID-19 vaccine, you should not be vaccinated until it is determined to be safe by an allergist or other health care provider.
 - proven immediate or anaphylactic hypersensitivity to the vaccine or one of its ingredients
 - If you are allergic to polyethylene glycol (included in the vaccine), you should not be vaccinated until it is determined to be safe by an allergist or other health care provider. Found in some products such as cosmetics, skin care products, laxatives, cough syrups, bowel preparation products for colonoscopy, and some foods and drinks.
- You should not be vaccinated if you have any [symptoms that could be due to COVID-19](#) so that you do not spread infection to others.
- If you received another vaccine (not a COVID-19 vaccine) in the past 14 days, it is best to wait 2 weeks from that last vaccine to receive your COVID-19 vaccine.

Please tell the health care provider if:

- **You have fainted or felt faint after receiving past vaccines or medical procedures.** Your health care provider may recommend that you receive 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.

How is the vaccine administered?

The vaccine is given as a needle in the upper arm and will require two doses given 21 to 28 days apart.

What are the risks of the vaccine?

- No serious side effects have been found to-date. People who have received the vaccine in studies continue to be monitored for any longer term side effects.
- Side effects can develop in the day or two after receiving the vaccine. Although these side effects are not serious to your health, they may make you feel unwell for a day or two; they will go away on their own. These types of side effects are expected and can indicate the vaccine is working to produce protection. Side effects include one or more of the following:
 - pain or swelling where the needle was given
 - tiredness
 - headache
 - muscle pain
 - joint pain
 - chills
 - fever
- Enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands) in some people which lasted for several days.
- Rarely allergic reactions can occur after receiving 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. The clinic staff are prepared to manage an allergic reaction should it occur. Seek immediate medical care if you develop any of these symptoms.
- It is important to note that **you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine.**

What measures have been put in place to safely provide immunizations during COVID-19?

Health care providers are being very careful to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when offering immunizations.

Examples of extra safety measures include the following:

- You will be asked about [any COVID-19 symptoms](#) when you arrive at the clinic. People with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the clinic.
- You will be asked to wear a mask while at the clinic, as well as to clean your hands, and to stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) from others (except those you live with).
- The staff will also be wearing personal protective equipment and will be cleaning their hands before and after each client.
- Other measures may also be put in place in clinics. Be sure to read and follow any signs or instructions provided.

COVID-19 Vaccine After-Care Information Sheet

What should I do right after receiving the vaccine?

- **Wait for at least 15 minutes** after receiving your vaccine. Longer waiting times of 30 minutes may be recommended if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy. Though uncommon, fainting or allergic reactions can occur after vaccination. 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. The clinic staff are prepared to manage these events should they occur.
- You will be asked to wait in the clinic for 15 minutes after receiving your vaccine.
- **Inform a health care provider** at the clinic if you feel unwell while waiting.
- Be sure to **leave your mask on** if at all possible and **remain at least 2 metres away** from anyone not part of your household.
- Use the **alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands** before leaving the clinic.
- **Do not operate a vehicle** or other form of transportation for at least 15 to 30 minutes after being vaccinated or if you are feeling unwell.
- **Once you leave the clinic, call 9-1-1 right away if you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms of an allergic reaction** such as hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy), swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing. Inform your health care provider of any concerning side effects after receiving the vaccine.
- **Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials** to prevent spread of COVID-19, which includes wearing a mask, staying at least 2 metres from others and limiting / avoiding contact with others outside your household.
- **Do not receive any other vaccines (except for your second COVID-19 vaccine)** until you have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccines and at least 28 days have passed after the second dose.
- **Keep your immunization record** with information about the COVID-19 vaccine in a safe place.

What should I expect in the next few days?

- Side effects can develop in the day or two after receiving the vaccine. Although these side effects are not serious to your health, they may make you feel unwell for a day or two; they will go away on their own.
 - The most common side effect is pain where the needle was given; swelling where the needle was given may also occur. A cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack where the vaccine was given may help.

- Other symptoms may include tiredness, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills or fever. Enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands) that last for several days may also occur.
- If needed, pain or fever medication (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen) may help with pain or fever. Check with your health care provider if you need advice about medication.
- Serious side effects after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, **should you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms that could be an allergic reaction, call 9-1-1 right away.** Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:
 - Hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
 - Swelling of the face, tongue or throat
 - Difficulty breathing
 Any serious side effects after vaccination should be reported to your local public health department.
- If you have any concerns about the symptoms you develop after receiving the vaccine, contact your health care provider for advice.
- If you still need to receive your second dose, tell the person providing the second dose about any side effects you experienced.

When should I return for my second dose of vaccine?

- **Return for your second dose of the Pfizer / BioNTech vaccine in 21 to 28 days.** It is very important to receive the second dose for the vaccine to work well. Make an appointment or follow the instructions of the health care provider to ensure you receive the second dose at the right time and with the Pfizer / BioNTech vaccine (and not another COVID-19 vaccine).
- Tell the person providing the second dose about any side effects you experienced after the first dose.

Things to remember

- **Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials** to prevent spread of COVID-19, which may include wearing a mask, staying at least 2 metres from others and limiting / avoiding contact with others outside your household.
- **Do not receive any other vaccines (except for your second COVID-19 vaccine)** until you have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccines and at least 28 days have passed after the second dose.
- **Keep this sheet or other immunization record** in a safe place. You can also download the [CANImmunize](#) app to keep track of this and other vaccines.

IMMUNIZATION RECORD for Pfizer / BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine (COVID-19 mRNA vaccine) (0.3 ml)

Dose #1	Date	Dose #2	Date