



COVID-19 Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions

This handout is to provide **accurate medical information** to help you make an **informed decision**. It has been reviewed by doctors. This is the most up to date information as of March 2021, and it will be updated as needed.



Were the vaccines tested in people of colour or other minority groups?

The vaccine studies had **20% to 38% people of colour and other minorities**.



Should I get a second shot of the vaccine if I had mild side effects?

Yes! Mild side effects happen to a lot of people. You need two shots for full protection - **one dose does not give you enough protection**. If you had a bad reaction, then it is best to talk to a medical professional about this.



I have bad allergies, should I get the vaccine?

If you are allergic to the ingredients in the vaccine or have had a bad reaction to another vaccine before, then you should not get the vaccine. If you have bad allergies to other things (food, medicines), then **speak to a medical professional**.



How is the vaccine roll out working and who gets the vaccine first?

We have a group (“task force”) who is handling the different stages of vaccine roll-out. Those who can get very sick from COVID-19 will get the vaccine first: healthcare workers, those in long-term care homes, etc. The next phase will include people with health issues and older people. **In phase 3, all people who want a vaccine will be able to get one.**



Do these vaccines work for people over the age of 65?

Both Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccinations showed similar protection in people over 65 years of age as they did in younger people: **Pfizer-BioNTech provided 95% immunity, while Moderna had 86% immunity for patients over 65.**



Will I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

The vaccines are not “live” – this means they do not have any virus in them, so **they can not cause an infection in your body.**



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Would I still need to wear a mask after getting my vaccine? Why?

Yes. There is a small chance you can still get sick from COVID-19 and then give it to others. **You still have to wear a mask and make sure you are social distancing after getting the vaccine.**



Do we have a lot of information about side effects?

The studies that were done show good results, with **few serious side effects**. Most side effects happen between 2-3 days after getting the vaccine and up to 6 weeks after. When the studies were done, they **checked people for up to 2 months after they got their vaccines**.



What about long-term side effects?

Even now, Health Canada is still checking people who get their vaccines to make sure there are no other side effects that come up. **If a new side effect does come up, it will be very rare and should not cause too much worry.**



What is “herd immunity” and how does it work?

Herd immunity means **people get protected from the virus indirectly**. By vaccinating as many people as we can, we make sure other people who have not been vaccinated do not get the virus and cannot get sick from it. We think **immunizing 70-80% of people will lead to immunity for everyone and provide herd immunity**.



There is a lot of information on WhatsApp, Facebook, and other social media. How do I know what is right?

Get information from a trusted source, like your **family physician or nurse practitioner**, or online from **Public Health websites** (see links below).



How long am I protected for?

At this time, we do not know how long you will be protected for after a vaccine.

If you have more questions, you can speak with a medical professional who can provide you with more resources and information. **You can also visit the following Public Health websites:**

1. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>
2. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines.html>

