

COVID-19 Community Vaccination Centre

Frequently Asked Questions

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Vaccine prioritization

Is it mandatory for to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

- No. The COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary.

What vaccine we receiving?

- The COVID-19 Vaccination Centre will have supply of both Pfizer and Moderna on varying days depending on supply.
- You will not have a choice between which vaccine to receive.

How do I know if I am eligible to receive the vaccine?

- Vaccinations will be available to those who qualify under the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 vaccine program, <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/getting-covid-19-vaccine-ontario>.
- If you do not meet the Ministry of Health's criteria for getting vaccinated, you will be turned away.
- For specific eligibility related to the COVID-19 Community Vaccination Centre at Cornell Community Centre, please visit <https://www.eyrnd.ca/vaccinationcentre>

Getting the vaccine

Where is the vaccination site located?

- The vaccination site is located at the Cornell Community Centre, 3201 Bur Oak Ave, east side of MSH on Bur Oak Avenue at Church Street and is fully accessible.
- Vaccinations will take place inside the gymnasium
- Parking is free (validated).

Can I choose where I want to get immunized?

- Yes. You can choose to go to any York Region Public Health Vaccination Centre, as part of the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Vaccination program.

What do I need to know?

- All vaccinations are **by appointment only**. Each person needs their own appointment.
- **Walk-ins will not be accepted.**
- If you require assistance and bring a family member with you, they will not be vaccinated with you.
- You must meet the current eligibility criteria outlined by the Ministry of Health to get the vaccine available at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/getting-covid-19-vaccine-ontario>.

Why can't I walk in for a vaccine?

- Vaccine preparation requires thawing and specialized handling, which is pre-determined by the number of people expected that day through online booking. Walk in requests are unpredictable and cannot be added to the daily allotment of vaccine

How do I book an appointment to get my vaccination?

- To book your appointment you must meet the eligibility criteria from the Ministry of Health: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/getting-covid-19-vaccine-ontario>.
- Appointment bookings are online: EYRND.ca/vaccinationcentre
- Once your appointment has been confirmed you will receive an email or text message to address or number you provided.
- The confirmation will include a QR code and/or a confirmation number. Please bring this confirmation (either digital or paper copy) to your appointment. You will need to present this when you arrive for check-in.
- If you do not have access to the internet or have issues booking online please call: 1-888-999-6488.

What happens when I arrive at the site to get my vaccine?

- Please arrive to the Cornell Community Centre, 10 minutes before your scheduled appointment time.
- Wearing a mask is required when entering the vaccination centre and physical distancing must be maintained from others attending the centre.
- Please wear a short sleeve shirt for easy access to your upper arm to receive the vaccine.
- When you arrive you will be asked a series of screening questions. If you are unwell or have symptoms of COVID-19, do not come to the vaccination centre. Please reschedule your appointment.
- Please bring your health card (if you have one), and another government issued identification with proof of age.
- After you have passed the screening process, you will be asked to check-in and consent to the vaccination.
- Get vaccinated.
- Wait 15 minutes following vaccination, as per guidelines.
- Once the 15 minutes is complete, you can check-out.
- NOTE: Second dose appointments are scheduled at the time of booking first dose appointments. Please see below for updates to the requirements for second dose appointments.

Do we have to pay for parking at the vaccination sites?

- Parking is free for those getting the vaccine.

When and how will my second shot be scheduled?

- Second dose appointments are scheduled at the time of booking first dose appointments. Please see below for updates to the requirements for second dose appointments.
- As directed by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer, all COVID-19 vaccine clinics in the province, have extended the time between the first and second dose administration of the COVID-19 vaccine to four months (112-120 days). The new guidance is based on a recommendation from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) [here](#).
- Increasing the time between first and second doses allows more people to get the benefit of immunity from a first dose while the vaccine supply continues to be limited. The COVID-19 vaccine continues to be equally effective even with the extension of time between doses.
- The extended dose interval applies to all individuals who have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or who will be receiving the COVID-19 vaccine in a clinic. It does not apply to individuals residing within Long Term Care Residences, High Risk Retirement Homes, First Nations Elder Care Homes and remote and isolated First Nations communities.
- **What this means** – Individuals with an appointment scheduled to receive their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at COVID-19 Community Vaccination Centre at Cornell Community Centre that is not within the new 112-120 days guideline will have their appointment rescheduled to four months from their first dose.
- **How appointments will be rescheduled** – You will receive an email notification with a new date and time for your second dose appointment.

About the vaccine

What types of COVID-19 vaccine(s) are available? Will I get to choose?

- There are multiple COVID-19 vaccine candidates. Health Canada must authorize any vaccine before it will be available to Canadians.
- Health Canada authorized the Pfizer vaccine on December 9, 2020 and the Moderna vaccine on December 23, 2020. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are the first to be distributed in Canada.
- AstraZeneca** was approved on February 26, 2021 and Johnson and Johnson on March 5, 2021.
- Pfizer and Moderna report that both vaccines are around 95 per cent effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infection.
- You will not be able to choose which vaccine you will receive as it will depend on the availability of either the Pfizer or the Moderna vaccines in early 2021.

**Astra Zeneca is currently being reviewed by the province of Ontario, which has halted offering this vaccine at this time

How many doses or shots is the COVID-19 vaccine?

- Both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines require two doses.
- The Pfizer vaccine requires two doses 21 days apart, while the Moderna vaccine requires two doses 28 days apart.

- COVID-19 vaccines are not interchangeable. The second dose of any COVID-19 vaccine must be completed with the same vaccine product as the first dose.

Can I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

- Based on current knowledge, experts believe that mRNA vaccines (like the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines) are unlikely to pose a risk for pregnant or breastfeeding people or their babies. However, pregnant and breastfeeding people were not included in any of the clinical trials for currently authorized COVID-19 vaccines, therefore, no data is currently available on the safety of the vaccines in pregnant or breastfeeding people.
- The COVID-19 vaccine should not be given simultaneously with any other vaccines. You will need to wait a minimum of 14 days before and after the administration of other vaccines before getting the first and second dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- The Ministry of Health recommendation for:
 - Pregnancy
 - Pregnant women were excluded from the Phase III trials for COVID-19 vaccines available at present and thus there is no data on the safety of administration in pregnancy.
 - Pregnant individuals in the authorized age group may choose to receive the vaccine after informed counselling and consent that includes: (1) a review of the risks and benefits of the vaccine, (2) a review of the potential risks /consequences of a COVID-19 infection in pregnancy, (3) a review of the risk of acquiring a COVID-19 infection in pregnancy and (4) an acknowledgment of the insufficiency of evidence for the use of current COVID-19 vaccines in the pregnant population. If after this counselling by their treating provider, the pregnant individual feels the potential benefits of vaccination outweigh the potential harms, they should be able to access the vaccine.
 - [Refer to statement from The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada](#)
 - Breastfeeding
 - Breastfeeding women were excluded from the Phase III trials for COVID-19 vaccines available at present and as such there are no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in lactating women or the effects of mRNA vaccines on the breastfed infant or milk production.
 - COVID-19 mRNA vaccines are not live vaccines and, based on their biologic mechanism of action, mRNA vaccines are not hypothesized to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant. For any individuals who are breastfeeding, the COVID-19 vaccine should be offered after recognizing the insufficiency of evidence for the use of COVID-19 vaccine in the breastfeeding population.

Can I get COVID-19 from a vaccine?

- A COVID-19 vaccine will give you protection against the disease without having to get sick with the actual virus.
- It is not possible to get COVID-19 from a vaccine, but it is possible to get symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 infection (see What are the side effects of the vaccine?).
- The goal of the vaccine is to provide your body with the tools it needs to fight the COVID-19 virus if you were to get infected.

Will I be protected from COVID-19 if I only receive the first dose?

- It is very important to get both doses of the vaccine so that your body develops enough antibodies to fight the COVID-19 virus if you get infected at a later time, and to provide the longest protection possible.
- Getting more than one dose for a vaccine is not unusual. In fact, it's the norm. Many routine vaccines require more than one dose for maximum protection.

Does the vaccine protect against all strains of COVID-19?

- While there are several known variants of COVID-19, current evidence suggests the vaccine will protect against all of them (as of 10 January 2021).

What are the side effects of the vaccines?

- Most people who received the vaccines in clinical trials experienced mild to moderate side effects that typically went away on their own after a few days. The most commonly reported side effects for the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are pain, swelling, and redness at the injection site; pain, tenderness and swelling of the lymph nodes in the same arm of the injection; fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, nausea/vomiting, and fever for a few days after receiving the vaccine, with more pronounced discomfort after the second dose. The frequency and severity of side effects may vary between the two vaccines. Different people may experience different side effects, even if they receive the same vaccine.
- The process of building immunity can cause symptoms. These symptoms are normal and show that your body's immune system is responding to a vaccine. Other routine vaccines, like the flu vaccine, have similar side effects.
- If you experience discomfort after the first dose of the vaccine, it is very important that you still receive the second dose a few weeks later for full protection.

Are there any serious side effects of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

- Decades of vaccine research demonstrates that most serious side effects generally occur within six weeks of administering a vaccine.
- Because these are new vaccines, researchers will be learning more about rare side effects, if any, over the next year. To identify side effects that happen only very rarely (e.g., once in 50,000 doses), hundreds of thousands of people need to be vaccinated and followed over time.
- It is reassuring to know that there is excellent surveillance to report rare side effects in Canada and that millions of people are being vaccinated in countries where these reporting systems exist. For example, the allergic reactions seen with the Pfizer vaccine were reported the first day of vaccination in the United Kingdom.

What would happen if a vaccine turned out to have serious side effects?

- Science shows that generally the most serious side effects occur within six weeks of vaccine administration. The current available COVID-19 vaccines have been studied for longer than six weeks, and the companies have not identified or reported serious safety concerns.

Will the vaccine have any effect on fertility?

- Based on how the mRNA vaccines work there is no plausible mechanism for these vaccines to affect fertility. Developmental and Reproductive Toxicity (DART) studies on rats both for the Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines did not raise any major safety concerns.

Can the vaccine cause an allergic reaction?

- Although it is rare, the COVID-19 vaccines may cause mild allergic reactions in some people, like itching or rash. Extremely rarely, some people may have a severe allergic reaction (like anaphylaxis, a combination of an itchy rash, difficulty breathing, tongue/throat swelling, vomiting/diarrhea, and/or loss of consciousness).
- Sites administering COVID-19 vaccines will have health care staff, medications, and supplies for managing anaphylaxis (like epi-pens) on hand in case someone experiences a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine.
- People with a history of severe allergic reactions, such as anaphylaxis, to any component of a COVID-19 vaccine should not receive that vaccine.
- People who have had severe allergic reactions to other vaccines in the past should use caution and talk with their allergist or immunologist before deciding whether or not to get vaccinated.
- People with a history of severe allergic reactions unrelated to any vaccine components may get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The health care provider administering your vaccine will monitor you for any allergic reactions you may have after getting vaccinated. They will watch you for at least 15 minutes after the injection (or for 30 minutes if you have a history of anaphylaxis).

Can I get the vaccine if I am immunocompromised?

- People living with HIV, other immunocompromising conditions, or who take immunosuppressive medications or therapies might be at increased risk for severe COVID-19. There is currently not enough data to establish vaccine safety and efficacy in these groups.
- People with stable HIV infection were included in phase 2/3 clinical trials, though data specific to this group are not yet available.
- Because the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are mRNA vaccines, they do not contain live virus and cannot give you COVID-19.
- Ministry of Health recommendation:
 - Individuals with autoimmune conditions or who were immunocompromised due to disease or treatment were excluded from the Phase III trials for COVID-19 vaccines available at present and thus currently there is no data on the safety of administration in this population.
 - Individuals in the authorized age group with autoimmune conditions, immunodeficiency conditions or those immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment may choose to receive the vaccine after informed counselling and consent that includes: (1) a review of the risks and benefits of the vaccine, (2) a review of the potential risks /consequences of a COVID infection, (3) a review of the risk of acquiring a COVID infection, and (4) an acknowledgment of the insufficiency of the evidence for the use of currently available COVID-19 vaccines in these populations and in view of possible decreased vaccine effectiveness with the use of immunosuppressive therapy.

Do I still need to wear a mask and physical distance after receiving the vaccine?

- Yes. Although the vaccine should protect you from symptomatic infection, it is not yet known if vaccinated persons can pass on (i.e., transmit) the COVID-19 virus. For this reason, despite vaccination you must continue to follow infection prevention and control (IPAC) guidance including masking and social distancing until more is known.

Do I need to quarantine from possible exposure if I have received two doses of the vaccine?

- Yes. Although completing two doses of vaccination should protect you from symptomatic infection, it remains unknown if someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 can develop asymptomatic infection and spread the virus to others. Until we know more, it is important to continue to follow IPAC recommendations including quarantining, masking and social distancing even after you have been vaccinated.

Do I need to quarantine following possible exposure between doses?

- Yes. You should follow standard quarantine as advised by local public health officials if you are possibly exposed between doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

Do I need to isolate if I develop COVID-19-like symptoms more than one to two weeks after getting the second dose of the vaccine?

- Yes. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time after the first or second dose of vaccine, you should isolate and contact your health care provider for instructions on whether to be tested for COVID-19 or other infections.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Data from Pfizer's clinical trials suggest that mRNA vaccines are likely safe and effective in people who have recovered from a previous COVID-19 infection. It is recommended to wait at least 90 days after recovering from COVID-19 before getting the vaccine to allow for those without immunity to be vaccinated given the shortage of vaccines.
- It is currently unknown how long natural immunity lasts after recovering from COVID-19.
- Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long as that from vaccination, and very rare cases of reinfection have been reported.

If I get vaccinated, is it possible for me to still get a milder form of COVID-19 than if I hadn't been vaccinated?

- The COVID-19 vaccines have gone through large clinical trials and have shown to be very effective in preventing symptoms of the disease. However, it remains unknown if someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 can develop asymptomatic infection and spread the virus to others. Until we know more, it is important to continue taking precautions, like wearing masks and practicing physical distancing, even after you have been vaccinated.

Should I take a test to see if I am infected before getting the vaccine?

- It is not recommend to get tested to see if you are infected before getting the vaccine. If you do NOT have any symptoms and /or have not been recently exposed to COVID-19, there is NO need to get a test before receiving the vaccine.
- If you DO have symptoms and/or have been recently exposed to COVID-19, please arrange appropriate testing, before going to a vaccination centre.

When will kids be able to receive the vaccine?

- Currently, the vaccines are under review for children.
- Research is being conducted on the dosing of the vaccine for children.
- At this time, the Pfizer vaccine is recommended for people age 12 and up, and the Moderna age 18 years and older.