



## COVID-19 VACCINES | Qs & As

### **I received my first dose, can I stop wearing my mask and return to my normal routine?**

No. You need to get the second dose of your vaccine and continue following safety precautions. Wear your mask, avoid large gatherings, and wash your hands frequently. There are still a lot of people who aren't vaccinated. While you may be less likely to become severely sick with COVID-19 we don't know if the vaccinated people can still spread the virus.

### **What happens after I get the vaccine?**

After a health professional gives you the vaccine, you will be asked to wait for 15 minutes before leaving - folks who have a history of allergic reactions will be asked to stay for 30 minutes. This ensures you feel well enough to leave and quickly respond if you were to have an adverse reaction. Talk with your health care provider if you are feeling unwell.

### **Are there serious side effects of the vaccine?**

Serious effects are rare. If you develop serious symptoms, it could be due to an allergy. This includes itchy bumps on the skin, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, and difficulty breathing.

### **Should my children get the vaccine?**

Yes. Your child has already received vaccines that protect them from 15 serious diseases. Diseases such as polio and rubella have been wiped out in Canada because of vaccines. The approved COVID-19 vaccines in Canada have proven to be safe and effective in children aged 12 and up. Increasingly, children and young adults have had higher rates of COVID-19 infection in Alberta and they can be hospitalized with severe disease. Health Canada has only approved vaccinations for children 12 and older.

Vaccinating your children will ensure that families can get back to their daily routines. Through vaccination we can achieve community immunity - which means we can protect people who can't be vaccinated due to pre-existing health issues.

## **Is it safe for children to take the vaccine?**

Children might experience the same common vaccine side effects, such as pain, redness and swelling in the spot where the needle was administered. Flu-like symptoms are common, including chills, fatigue, joint pain, headache, mild fever and muscle aches. Children could become more irritable than usual.

If your children experience any unusual symptoms, not included here, please contact your healthcare provider. If it is an emergency, please call 911.

## **My child is anxious about needles. What should I look out for?**

Some children, who are anxious about needles, can experience stress-related symptoms. These could include pale skin, sweating, dizziness, numbness or tingling, rapid breathing and a loss of sensation in face, hands, or feet.

To calm your child, encourage them to try slow, deep breaths for 10 seconds.

Some children may faint while under stress. Fainting has no negative effects on its own, but it can lead to children injuring themselves if they fall. Inform the physician if your child has a history of fainting. Clinics will provide a space for your child to lay down for their vaccination.

## **My child hasn't been tested for allergies. Is it okay for them to receive the vaccine?**

The nurse giving the vaccine will assess your child for any specific contraindications to the vaccine. Questions about allergy testing should be raised with your primary care practitioner. Fortunately, the risk of anaphylaxis to the vaccine is very low. Anaphylaxis is treatable. Some of the symptoms include an itchy rash, swelling of the lips, face, airway, and tongue, an increased heart rate, loss of consciousness, sudden low blood pressure, abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea, sneezing, coughing, and difficulty breathing. Anyone receiving a vaccination is asked to stay 15 minutes after receiving the dose to monitor for adverse reactions.

If your child experiences any of these symptoms after leaving the vaccination site, call 911.

## **I have heard that vaccines can cause autism in children. Is this true?**

[Studies have found that vaccines do not cause autism.](#)