

YOURHEALTH OURSTRENGTH



COVID-19 VACCINES Qs & As

HOW DO VACCINES WORK?

Vaccines contain weakened or inactive parts of a particular organism (antigen) that triggers an immune response within the body. Newer vaccines contain the blueprint for producing antigens. The vaccine provides enough of the antigen that our body learns to build the specific antibody. This way, if the body encounters the real antigen later, it knows how to respond and defeat it.

The vaccine is recommended for people with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes and/or heart disease. This is because most people with underlying health conditions are vulnerable to developing a severe illness if they contract COVID-19, and vaccines are the most effective way to prevent that from happening.

WHY SHOULD I GET THE VACCINE?

It can be difficult to separate the truth and facts about vaccinations. Widespread immunization has been proven to be one of the most successful public health strategies against numerous diseases. The COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you and others around you, particularly people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

ARE THERE SIDE EFFECTS TO THE VACCINE?

Side effects include pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, and fever. These reactions generally last one to two days. They are evidence that your immune system is working to respond to the vaccine and is a normal reaction to most vaccines.

I HAVE HEARD THAT THE COVID-19 VACCINES ARE UNPROVEN OR HARMFUL. IS THIS TRUE?

The COVID-19 vaccine has been rigorously tested and approved by Health Canada. Like all vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines must go through a rigorous, multi-step process, including large-scale trials involving tens of thousands of people. These trials, which include groups at high risk for COVID-19 (certain groups, such as pregnant and breastfeeding women, were not included in vaccine trials), are specifically designed to identify any common side effects or other problems of security.

The process to develop the vaccine was accelerated while still meeting the highest standards. With the urgent need to end the pandemic, interruptions between stages (such as funding) that most vaccines come across were eliminated or shortened to speed up the process.

WHY SHOULD I TRUST HEALTH CANADA?

The legacy of the residential school system, past unethical medical experiments and ongoing racism are very serious issues that can influence your decision.

Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is an individual's choice. The federal, provincial, and territorial governments are aware that some individuals are unsure about receiving the COVID-19 vaccines. They are aware that seeking free, prior, and informed consent from individuals prior to vaccination is essential and required. National Indigenous organizations, some national Indigenous health organizations, and Indigenous Elders and leaders have been involved in planning for COVID-19 vaccine distribution to Indigenous communities.

CAN I STOP WEARING MY MASK AFTER I GET VACCINATED?

No. If you have been vaccinated, it is important to continue following public health orders to protect each other and stop the spread of COVID-19. While the vaccine will help prevent you from getting sick, it's possible that you could still carry COVID-19 and be contagious to others who have not received their immunization. To stop the spread of the virus, herd immunity will need to be achieved through immunization. Continue to wash your hands, stay home when sick, maintain physical distancing, and wear your mask when leaving your home.

