

mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty/Moderna Spikevax



Be sure to read this whole sheet carefully and ask a healthcare provider any questions you have before receiving the vaccine.

HOW DO MRNA VACCINES PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19?

- Both vaccines use a method called messenger RNA (mRNA) which helps our body protect against the virus.
- The vaccine causes our bodies to create protection (antibodies) that helps prevent the COVID-19 virus from entering our cells and making us sick.
- The Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty® and Moderna Spikevax® vaccines have shown to work very well at preventing people from becoming sick beginning 7 days after the second dose compared to those who did not receive the vaccine.

WHO SHOULD GET AN MRNA COVID-19 VACCINE?

- Children aged between 5 years of age and 11 without contraindications can receive the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Pediatric formulation (10mcg) vaccine.
- NB recommends that Moderna's Spikevax (50 mcg) vaccine as a 3-dose primary series may be considered for some immunocompromised individuals 6 to 11 years of age. NACI continues to recommend Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty vaccine over Moderna's Spikevax for this age group. A full discussion with the child's health care

provider should happen first and include informed consent of the risks and benefits of giving this vaccine.

- Those individuals aged between 12 and 29 without contraindications should receive the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that people under 30 receive the Pfizer vaccine due to a rare but increased risk of myocarditis and pericarditis following the use of Moderna vaccine in those aged between 12-29 years old.
- Those individuals aged 30 and over without contraindications can receive either Moderna Spikevax or the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty vaccines.
- mRNA vaccines can be used as part of a mixed series. Anyone who has received their flu shot or other non-COVID vaccine can now safely get a COVID-19 vaccine without any waiting period.
- Those who have had a COVID-19 vaccine infection (see table below).
- If you are wondering if the vaccine is right for you, talk to your healthcare provider.

YOU SHOULD NOT GET THE VACCINE IF:

- If you have had a serious or allergic reaction to a dose of an mRNA vaccine, you should not receive the same shot until it is determined to be safe by a health care provider.
 - A confirmed anaphylactic hypersensitivity to the vaccine or one of the ingredients in the vaccine.
 - If you were diagnosed with inflammation of the heart or lining of the outside of the heart (myocarditis/pericarditis) after a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. The decision to administer an mRNA vaccine with a history of myocarditis or pericarditis should take into account the individual's clinical circumstances. Having a prior medical history of myocarditis and/ or pericarditis does not prevent getting your very first dose of mRNA.
- a health care provider at the clinic if you feel unwell while waiting.
 - 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.
 - Serious side effects immediately after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, if you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms that could be an allergic reaction, tell the health care provider at the clinic right away. The clinic staff are prepared to manage serious symptoms should it occur. 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

HOW IS THE VACCINE GIVEN?

- The vaccine is given as a needle in the upper arm and will require two doses in your primary series.
- The recommended interval between the first and second dose is 8 weeks to improve the immune response.
- mRNA vaccines are recommended for all booster doses. Booster doses in New Brunswick are given at least 5 months after the initial vaccine series.
- It is important to note that you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT AFTER RECEIVING AN MRNA VACCINE?

- Wait for at least 15 minutes after receiving your vaccine in the space provided for you by the healthcare provider. Longer waiting times of 30 minutes may be recommended if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy or if it has been advised by your health care provider.
- Though uncommon, fainting or allergic reactions can occur after vaccination. Inform

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT THE NEXT FEW DAYS?

- Common 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 approximately one to three days. The side effects will usually go away on their own.
- Common side effects include: pain, redness or swelling where the needle was given tiredness, muscle aches, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, nausea, vomiting, chills or fever.
- For comfort, you can put a cool/damp cloth on the injection site, rest, and/or take pain or fever medication. Your health care provider may provide you with additional guidance.
- Serious side effects after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, if you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms after you have returned home that could be serious call 9-1-1 right away. Serious symptoms of an allergic reaction include: hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing.
- Seek medical care right away if you develop symptoms that could be myocarditis/pericarditis such as chest pain, shortness of breath or a fast or irregular heartbeat. Most cases are mild and symptoms resolve quickly after seeking medical care.
- mRNA vaccines have been associated with very rare reports of Bell's Palsy following vaccination. Bell's Palsy is typically a temporary episode of facial muscle weakness or paralysis and symptoms generally start to improve after a few weeks. Seek medical attention if you develop any symptoms such as inability to control facial expressions, such as smiling, squinting, blinking or closing the eyelid, loss of feeling on one side of the face or cheek, tearing from the eye, drooling or hypersensitivity to sound in the one ear.
- Individuals with serious side effects after vaccination should be reported to your local Public Health Office or health care provider.

- Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials.
- Do not receive testing for tuberculosis (TB) until at least 28 days after a COVID-19 vaccine (unless recommended by your health care provider).

WHEN SHOULD I RETURN TO RECEIVE THE NEXT DOSE OF THE VACCINE?

- Make an appointment or follow the instructions of the health care provider to ensure you receive the next dose at the right time. After your primary series, a booster dose is also recommended. Receiving your next dose at the right time will ensure your safety and the best possible protection against new circulating variants that lasts as long as possible for you.
- Depending on the vaccine you receive and your health situation, the health care provider will discuss the number of doses and boosters you require to complete your COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Keep your immunization record in a safe place. Register online at MyHealthNB to obtain a record of your COVID-19 immunizations. The paper record of COVID-19 Immunization provided when vaccinated will continue to be the official record. Keep a copy and take a picture of it. The paper copy or picture of the copy can be used as proof of vaccination.

TABLE 1: QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHEN RECEIVING AN MRNA COVID-19 VACCINE

Questions	Recommendations
Have you had a COVID-19 infection?	It is important for people with previous COVID-19 infection to be vaccinated to prevent becoming infected again. After a COVID-19 infection you should wait 8 weeks to start or complete your primary series and 3 months to receive your booster dose (or 5 months from the last dose in your primary series, whichever period is longer). If you would like more information on the best optimal time to get your vaccine after infection, visit GNB's FAQs document: When should I get vaccinated after a COVID-19 Infection?
If you have received previous dose(s) of a COVID-19 vaccine, did you have any side effects after vaccination?	It may be possible for people with previous allergic reactions to a COVID-19 vaccine to receive another vaccine type or the same vaccine type again. Consult with your health care provider.
Do you have a suspected but unproven allergy to a vaccine component (e.g., Tris/Sucrose, tromethamine or polyethylene glycol (PEG))?	If "yes", you may receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. You will be asked to wait in the clinic for 30 minutes after receiving the vaccine to make sure you are feeling well. If you are allergic to Tris/Sucrose, Tromethamine or Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) , you will need to consult with your health care provider about whether to receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
Are you or could you be pregnant? Are you breastfeeding?	Evidence is available from real world use of mRNA vaccines, which has not indicated any safety concerns for pregnant and breastfeeding populations. mRNA vaccines are the safest type of COVID-19 vaccine to get when your pregnant or breastfeeding. When you are pregnant, you have a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine lowers your risk of getting seriously ill from the virus. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding and have questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your healthcare provider.
Do you have any problems with your immune system or are you taking any medications that can affect your immune system? (e.g., high dose steroids, chemotherapy, some arthritis Medications)	Additional doses may be needed because of your immune system's response to the vaccine. Consult with your health care provider. In addition, you should continue to follow public health measures after vaccination (such as masking, physical distancing and hand hygiene).
Have you recently received specific medications for COVID-19 treatment (monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma)?	If "yes", you may be asked to delay receiving your COVID-19 vaccine.
Do you have a bleeding disorder or are you taking any medications that could affect blood clotting? Ask the health care provider if you are not sure about your medical conditions	If "yes", the health care worker may hold the site where the needle is given for longer to pre- vent bleeding and bruising. Individuals receiving long-term anticoagulation are not considered to be at higher risk of bleeding complications following immunization and may be safely immunized without discontinuation of their anticoagulation therapy.
Have you ever felt faint or fainted after a past vaccination or medical procedure?	If "yes", the health care provider may vaccinate you lying down to prevent you from fainting.