

mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet

Pfizer-BioNTech/Moderna Vaccines

Please read this information sheet carefully and ensure all your questions have been answered by a health care provider before receiving the vaccine.

How does mRNA vaccines protect against COVID-19?

The vaccine causes our body to produce protection (such as antibodies) that prevent the COVID-19 virus from entering our cells to make us sick. The vaccine uses a new method messenger RNA - or "mRNA" – which is the genetic code for a piece of the virus that helps our bodies produce protection against the virus.

Who should get the vaccine?

The vaccine can be used for anyone that meets the eligible age requirement. Even if you have already been sick with COVID-19, you should still receive the vaccine any time after three-months of your COVID-19 infection.

The vaccine can be given during pregnancy or breastfeeding if the benefits of receiving the vaccine outweigh the potential risks for the pregnant person and the fetus; and, if the person's informed consent includes discussion about the absence of evidence on the use of COVID-19 vaccine in persons who are pregnant and breastfeeding. More information can be found on the GNB Vaccine Website.

Individuals with auto-immune diseases or who take auto-immune medications can be given the vaccine if a risk assessment deems that the benefits outweigh the potential risks for the individual and if informed consent includes discussion about the absence of evidence on the use of COVID-19 vaccine in people with auto-immune diseases or who take auto-immune medications. More information can be found on the GNB Vaccine website.

If you are wondering if the vaccine is right for you, talk to your healthcare provider.

You should not get the vaccine if:

- You do not meet the age requirement.
- You have received another vaccine in the past 14 days (not a COVID-19 vaccine); or intend to receive another vaccine 4 weeks after your 2nd dose.
- You are currently experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
- You have a severe allergy to any ingredient in the vaccine, including polyethylene glycol (PEG).
- You had a severe reaction to a previous dose of COVID-19 vaccine, such as an allergic reaction, and have been advised by a healthcare provider not to get a second dose.
- You were infected with COVID-19 anytime during the past three months. (It is advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine any time after the three-month COVID-19 infection.)

If any of these circumstances apply, please talk to your healthcare provider about your options.

Tell the healthcare provider if:

- You have fainted or felt faint after receiving past vaccines or medical procedures.
- You have a bleeding disorder or are taking medication that could affect blood clotting.

How is the vaccine given?

The vaccine is given as a needle in the upper arm and will require two doses. If this is your first COVID-19 vaccine, be sure to return for your second dose when indicated.

What are the common side effects of the vaccine?

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 about one to three days. The side-effects usually will 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. Enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands) in your underarm may also occur.

Rarely, serious symptoms or symptoms of a life-threatening allergic reaction can occur after receiving a vaccine. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy), swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing. The clinic staff are prepared to manage an allergic reaction should occur. Notify a clinic staff person immediately if you any of these symptoms after getting the vaccine.

Any serious side-effects or common side-effects that last 72 hours after vaccination should be reported to your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will do an assessment and provide you with medical advice. If your healthcare provider thinks the symptoms are related to the vaccine that was given, Public Health will be consulted.

Safety Protocols are in place for your Protection

Healthcare providers are being very careful to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when offering immunizations. Examples of extra safety measures include the following:

- Clients will be screened for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) upon arrival. People with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the clinic.
- Public Health measures such as physical distancing, mask wearing, and hand hygiene will be followed.
- Staff will be wearing personal protective equipment and will be cleaning their hands before and after each client.
- Other measures may also be put in place. Be sure to read and follow any signs or additional instructions provided.

What should you do before coming to the clinic?

- Wear a short-sleeve shirt or top with sleeves that are easy to roll up.
- Have something to eat before coming to the clinic.
- Bring your mask.
- Bring any identification required by the clinic, such as your health card.
- If you are returning for your second dose of the vaccine, bring your record of immunization from your first dose. You can download the [CANimmunize](#) app to keep track of your vaccinations.

What should you do after receiving an mRNA vaccine?

- **Wait at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine** in a space provided for you by the healthcare provider. Longer waiting times may be recommended if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy. Inform a healthcare provider right away if you feel unwell while waiting.
- **Once you leave the clinic, call 9-1-1 if you develop symptoms of a life-threatening allergic reaction** (i.e. hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing) **or experience any respiratory distress.**
- **Continue to follow Public health measures** (wearing a mask, physical distancing and hand hygiene).
- **Do not receive any other vaccines (except for your second COVID-19 vaccine)** until you have received both doses of the COVID-19. If another vaccine is necessary for emergency purposes, your health care provider will advise you. Keep your **immunization record** with information about the COVID-19 vaccine in a safe place.
- **If your side effects mimic COVID-19 symptoms**, stay home until you feel better and get tested if your symptoms last longer than two days.