



Your COVID-19 vaccination

Everything you need to know



When you get vaccinated you're not just protecting yourself. You're also doing your bit by reducing the risk of passing on COVID-19 to your whānau, friends and community.

The COVID-19 vaccine is free, and available to everyone aged 16 years and over in Aotearoa.

How the vaccine works

The COVID-19 vaccine works by teaching your body to fight the virus, and protects you from getting sick. **The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19.**

You will need two doses of the vaccine, at least 21 days apart. To ensure you have the best protection, make sure you get both doses.

Is the vaccine safe?

All COVID-19 vaccines must meet internationally agreed standards for safety and efficacy.

Medsafe (New Zealand's medicines safety authority) only grants consent for vaccines to be used in New Zealand once they are satisfied that they are safe and effective.

There have been no shortcuts in granting approval for our COVID-19 vaccine (the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine).

What health information do I need to share?

If you have had an allergic reaction to any vaccine or injection in the past, please tell your vaccinator.

If you are taking any medications or have a bleeding disorder, talk to your health provider first.

If you are pregnant, talk to your midwife or doctor.

Getting your vaccination:



A healthcare worker will do a health check with you and answer your questions.



You will need to agree to be vaccinated. Remember you can ask questions at any time.



A fully-trained healthcare worker will then give you the vaccine in your upper arm.



You need to stay for at least 20 minutes so a healthcare worker can look out for you and make sure you are ok.



Once the healthcare worker is confident that you're fine and you are feeling okay, you can leave and carry on with your day.

Potential side-effects

Some mild side-effects, such as muscle aches, pain at the injection site or headaches, are common. They are actually a sign that your body's immune system is learning to fight the virus. They don't last long and won't stop you from having a second dose or going about your daily life.

After your vaccination:



You will be asked to get your second dose of the vaccine at least 21 days later.



This is important because you will get your best protection against COVID-19 after two doses.



If you feel unwell or are worried about any side-effects, speak with your trusted health professional.

And still continue to:



Stay home if you are sick and contact Healthline about getting a test.



Use the NZ COVID Tracer app and turn 'on' Bluetooth tracing.



Wear a face covering on all public transport and domestic flights.



Getting the right information matters

Be aware of incorrect or second-hand information on social media and other places.

You can get accurate and trusted information at:

- [Covid19.govt.nz/vaccines](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/vaccines)
- [Health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine](https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine)
- or talk with your doctor.

Find out where you can get the vaccine:

- [Covid19.govt.nz/vaccines](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/vaccines)