



# COVID-19 Vaccines

Vaccines are safe, effective and the best way to protect you and those around you from serious illness from COVID-19.



## Vaccine safety

Safe and reliable vaccines can help protect you and your family from COVID-19.

Creating a new vaccine typically takes years. However, the progress on COVID-19 vaccines is happening quickly for many reasons, including:

- Quick adaptation of existing research programs which have been informed by decades of research on other strains of coronavirus prior to COVID-19
- International collaboration among scientists, health professionals, researchers, industry, and governments
- Increased dedicated funding
- Quick recruitment of participants for clinical trials
- Rapid set-up of clinical trials
- Reduction of delays in the vaccine approval process

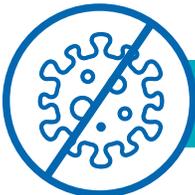
Before any vaccines are available, they:

- undergo rigorous clinical trials to ensure they are safe and effective
- are evaluated and authorized for use by Health Canada, using rigorous standards

Canada has very high standards for vaccine safety.

Health Canada only authorizes vaccines in Canada after a thorough and independent review of the scientific evidence. Once a vaccine is in use, Health Canada continues to monitor and can quickly have it removed if safety concerns are identified.

All COVID-19 vaccines must be authorized for use by Health Canada.



## How vaccines work

Vaccines reduce risks of getting a disease by working with your body's natural defenses to build protection and fight the virus if you are exposed. This protection can reduce your risk of developing COVID-19 and make your symptoms milder if you do get it.

**Our supply will not arrive all at once, so distribution will happen in stages.**

**The goal is for everyone in Waterloo Region to be able to get a COVID-19 vaccination if they want one, as soon as enough doses are available from manufacturers.**

Vaccination is expected to be an effective way to prevent the spread and reduce the impact of COVID-19.

The vaccines do not contain the virus and cannot give you COVID-19.

After completing the vaccine and receiving both doses, it may take another seven days to achieve maximum protection against COVID-19.



## Building immunity takes time

Safe and reliable vaccines can help protect you and your family from COVID-19. They will be an important tool to help stop the spread of the virus and allow individuals, families and workers to safely resume normal life.

The spread of the virus will slow down or stop when a large percentage of the population becomes immune to COVID-19. This is known as herd immunity.

In most cases, 80 to 95 per cent of the population must be immune to a disease to stop its spread and achieve herd immunity.

Until vaccines are widely available, we all must continue to:

- Avoid social gatherings with those outside your immediate household
- Limit non-essential trips outside your home
- Practice physical distancing
- Wear a face covering
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid enclosed, poorly ventilated spaces and crowded places
- Stay home when you are sick



## What are the side effects?

Some people may experience side effects from the vaccine, but they will likely be moderate and resolve after a few days. Some of the symptoms are part of the body's response to developing immunity.

Common side effects may include:

- Pain at the injection site
- Headache
- Feeling tired
- Muscle or joint pain
- Fever or chills
- Redness or swelling at the injection site

In rare cases, serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) can occur but they can be treated and are usually temporary.



Region of Waterloo  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND  
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Join the fight against COVID-19. Get vaccinated.  
[regionofwaterloo.ca/COVID19vaccine](https://regionofwaterloo.ca/COVID19vaccine)