

**COVID-19
Vaccine**

Get ready for your COVID-19 vaccination

(Pfizer vaccine)

The current priority is to provide the COVID-19 vaccine to health care providers, essential care providers, staff and residents of long-term care homes and retirement homes. You have been identified as someone who is eligible for this free vaccine.

You need two doses of the vaccine that will be given at least 21 days apart, for the best protection. See instructions below on how to prepare for your vaccine.

What you need to do:

1. Make or confirm your appointment.
2. Screen yourself for symptoms of COVID-19. If you have symptoms on the day of your appointment, stay home. Call to reschedule your appointment.
3. Bring your health card (OHIP). If you don't have one, bring another piece of government identification.
4. Bring your own mask, glasses or other assistive devices.
5. Wear a loose sleeve or short sleeve shirt for easy access to your upper arm.
6. Do not wear scented products (e.g. perfume) as some people are allergic.
7. You must stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after you have been vaccinated so you can be monitored for any side effects or allergic reactions. The entire process may take 30 minutes or longer.

Do not get this Pfizer vaccine, if you:

- have allergies to any vaccine ingredients, including polyethylene glycol (PEG); or
- have had a severe reaction to this vaccine.

Consult with your health care provider before booking an appointment, if you:

- are younger than 16 years of age (but between 12 to 15 years old);
- are pregnant, want to become pregnant soon after vaccination, or breastfeeding;
- have a autoimmune disorder or weakened immune system due to illness or treatment; or
- have a bleeding problem, bruise easily, or use a blood-thinning medicine.

Your health care provider will review the benefits and risks for your unique situation.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I don't have a health card, am I still eligible for the free vaccine?

Yes. If you don't have a health card, bring a government issued photo ID such as a driver's license, passport, Status Card, etc.

What are the vaccine ingredients that I may be allergic to?

- mRNA (medicinal ingredient)
- ALC-0315 = (4-hydroxybutyl)azanediyl)bis(hexane-6,1-diyl)bis(2-hexyldecanoate)
- ALC-0159 = 2-[(**polyethylene glycol**)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide
- 1,2-distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine
- dibasic sodium phosphate dehydrate
- monobasic potassium phosphate

What is polyethylene glycol (PEG)? How do I know if I have a PEG allergy?

This compound is commonly used in laxatives, makeup, skin care products, personal lubricants and toothpastes. It is also in cough syrup, and in some food and drinks. If you are unsure of the ingredients you are allergic to, talk to a health care provider.

Can I still get the vaccine if I have existing health conditions (such as diabetes, high blood pressure, hepatitis, HIV)?

Yes. People with stable health conditions, including HIV, may be vaccinated with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as long they are not on medications that weaken the immune system. This also includes people with stable hepatitis B or C.

Can I still get the vaccine if I'm trying to get pregnant?

There is limited information on the use of this Pfizer vaccine in pregnant people. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to have a baby, talk to your health care provider first. As a precaution, avoid trying to get pregnant for one to two months after finishing this two-dose vaccine.

If I have had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need the vaccine?

Yes. There is some evidence to suggest that natural immunity from a COVID-19 illness may not last very long. It is best to get the vaccine to stay protected.

Do I still need to wear and mask and avoid close contact with others if I have received this two-dose vaccine?

Yes. It is still important for everyone to continue with public health measures like wearing a mask, physical distancing and washing hands often until we can be sure that the vaccine prevents the spread of most COVID-19 infections.