

COVID-19 vaccine: Your questions answered

When can I get a vaccine?

There will be enough vaccines for everyone in Aotearoa aged 16 years and over to be vaccinated by the end of 2021.

We're offering vaccines first to people who are most at risk of getting and spreading COVID-19, and those most at risk of getting very sick from the virus. The groups are:

Group 1: Border and MIQ workers and the people they live with.

Group 2: High-risk frontline healthcare workers and people living in high-risk places.

Group 3: People at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, as defined at: health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine-rollout

Group 4: General population aged 16 and over.

Use this tool to find out which group you fall into, and when you can get a vaccine at: covid19.govt.nz/myvaccine

Find out more about how we're rolling out the vaccine: health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine-rollout

Can I get the vaccine if I have underlying health conditions?

At this stage, people with some underlying health conditions will be offered the vaccine as part of Group 3 (starting May 2021).

People with underlying health conditions who live in the Counties Manukau DHB area can be vaccinated as part of Group 2.

Find the full list of health conditions at: health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine-rollout

How do I apply for an early vaccine on compassionate grounds?

You can apply for early access to the vaccine at: health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine-early-access

Can I get a vaccine if I'm pregnant?

You should discuss your individual situation (particularly if you have other medical conditions) and the benefits and risks of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant with your midwife or doctor.

If you are pregnant and choose to have the vaccine, you can get early access. This is because people who are pregnant can become very sick if they get COVID-19.

Can I get a vaccine if I'm breastfeeding?

As with all vaccines on the New Zealand Immunisation Schedule, there are no safety concerns about giving the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to women who are breastfeeding. By being vaccinated, mothers can also provide some protection against COVID-19 for their babies via their breastmilk.

Can I get a vaccine if I'm trying for a baby?

There is no biologically plausible reason why this vaccine could have any effect on our genes or fertility. The mRNA from the vaccine does not enter the nucleus of any cells, which is where DNA is situated. In addition, no components of the vaccine or the spike protein produced reach the ovaries or the testes.

Find out more at: covid.immune.org.nz

How long do I need to wait between my different vaccinations? Eg. Flu and MMR?

You'll need to wait at least 2 weeks between the COVID-19 vaccine and influenza (flu) vaccine, and 4 weeks between the COVID-19 vaccine and the Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Which vaccine can I get in NZ?

In New Zealand, we're using the Pfizer vaccine as it's the only one to receive Medsafe approval to date.

We have secured enough for 5 million doses to cover everyone aged 16 and over who wants to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

We also have Advance Purchase Agreements with four other suppliers. If they get approved by Medsafe, we may have these as other vaccine options in the future.

Where do I go to get a vaccine?

Each district health board (DHB) around New Zealand is rolling out the vaccine for their region. The vaccine will be offered at different locations including: health centres, workplaces, Māori health providers and more. At this stage, New Zealand is vaccinating people in Group 2.

For Group 2, we are now vaccinating frontline health workers and people living or working in high-risk places e.g. residential care settings, older Māori and Pasifika, and certain people living in Counties Manukau DHB region who are over 65.

There's nothing you need to do now.

If you have any concerns or feel you may have been missed, please have a conversation with your employer or health centre and ensure they know you are happy for them to share your details with the vaccination teams.

How will I be contacted to get a vaccine? Who will contact me?

For Group 1: When a border or MIQ worker receives their appointment, they'll be sent a link to an online form. They can use this to enter the details of the people they live with. These people will be contacted about getting vaccinated.

If this doesn't happen within 1 week, phone Healthline on 0800 28 29 26 to confirm if their details are in the system.

For Group 2: Our vaccinator teams are working with providers, employers and relevant organisations to confirm contact details of those who should be offered the vaccine. Once those details are in the system, you will receive communication on how to schedule an appointment.

For Groups 3 and 4: We will provide more information in the coming weeks about how vaccines will work for you. We understand it's frustrating to wait, but you will receive communication in due course.

Full details here: health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine-rollout

When can children under 16 be vaccinated?

Not at this stage.

The need for a vaccine was highest among people who are at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. The first trial focused on those groups rather than younger people.

There is a trial that has just been completed for children aged 12-15 and a further trial is underway for children aged 6 months to 11 years.

We will receive the data from these in due course and update the public if any of the recommendations change for children.



Getting the right information matters.

Be aware of incorrect information on social media and other places.

You can get accurate and trusted information at:

covid19.govt.nz/vaccine
health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine

or call Healthline on **0800 358 5453**.