

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, three weeks or more apart. To ensure you have the best protection, make sure you get both doses.

Is the vaccine safe?

The Pfizer vaccine has been thoroughly assessed for safety by our own Medsafe experts.

Medsafe only grants consent for using a vaccine in Aotearoa once they're satisfied it has met strict standards for safety, efficacy and quality.

This is the same process used to assess other medicines, like the flu vaccine.

There have been no shortcuts taken in granting approval.

The Pfizer vaccine has been used successfully by millions worldwide.

It continues to be monitored for safety.

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.

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/get-the-facts](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/get-the-facts)
- [Health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine](https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine)
- [karawhiua.nz](https://www.karawhiua.nz)
- or talk with your doctor.

How can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

To book your appointment go to:
[BookMyVaccine.nz](https://www.bookmyvaccine.nz)

If you're unable to book online, you can call the COVID Vaccination Healthline on: **0800 28 29 26** (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week) and we'll make the booking for you and answer any questions. Interpretation services are available if you need them.

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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 12 years and over in Aotearoa.

Getting your vaccination:



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



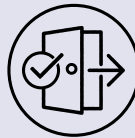
You will need to agree to be vaccinated. Remember, you can ask questions at any time.



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



You will need to stay for at least 15 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 ok, 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. These are more commonly reported after the second dose. 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.

There are some side effects that are more serious but very rare, like a severe allergic reaction or an inflammation of the heart. If you develop difficulty breathing, a racing heart, chest pain or feel faint immediately or in the days after the vaccine, you should seek medical attention.

After your vaccination:



You will be asked to get your second dose of the vaccine after a gap of three weeks or more.



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 to scan QR Codes to record your visits; turn on Bluetooth tracing.



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