



Sioux Lookout  
First Nations  
Health Authority

## **Radio Script: Learning About the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine**

**Developed: May 2021**

Hello and welcome. This is \_\_\_\_\_.

Today, we will be talking about the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

The Pfizer vaccine was approved for people over the age of 16 on December 9, 2020. It's now approved for youth ages 12 and up.

The Pfizer vaccine is the same kind of vaccine as the Moderna one. It is a mRNA vaccine.

RNA stands for ribonucleic acid. This is a tiny molecule that lives inside our cells. RNA contains recipes for making essential proteins.

mRNA stands for messenger RNA. The vaccine uses mRNA to send a new recipe to your cells. The mRNA is inside an envelope of lipids. The outer lining of the vaccine cell and your own cells are also made of lipids. These are attracted to each other. When they come close together, the envelope carrying the mRNA can slide inside your cell.

Your cell uses the new recipe to make coronavirus spike proteins. Your cell shows these spikes on its outer layer. Your immune system reacts because the spikes do not belong. It makes antibodies to fight and destroy them. Your immune system learns to recognize the spike proteins on the COVID-19 virus. It will attack the virus if you are infected.

The vaccine is given as a shot in the upper arm. Everyone gets two doses. The first dose starts our immune response. It allows our body to begin building protection. The second dose boosts our immunity. It is given at least 21 days later. We have the fullest protection from COVID-19 14 days after getting the second dose.

The Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective in preventing COVID-19. The recent study with youth reported the vaccine as 100% effective.



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The side effects of the vaccine are mild. They are like those we can get with other vaccines. Some people feel some pain in their arm where they got their shot. Some people feel a little tired. Others can get a headache, chills, or a slight fever. The side effects tend to only last a few days. Severe side effects are very rare. There are no reported safety issues.

The Pfizer vaccine is being offered to youth during Operation Remote Immunity 2.0. Youth from 12-17 years of age can get the vaccine. The reason is that Pfizer has finished its study with youth aged 12-15. They found that the vaccine was safe and very effective in youth. Once other vaccines have been fully tested on youth, they may become available. But for now, all youth 12 and up will be offered the Pfizer vaccine.

Many adults in our region got the Moderna vaccine. This is the same kind as Pfizer. It is just as safe. The change has to do with how the vaccines are stored. When it first came out, the Pfizer vaccine needed to be kept at very cold temperatures. Many communities in our area don't have the facilities to keep vaccines at such low temperatures. The Moderna vaccine does not need to be stored as cold. So, it was the best fit.

But we are always learning more about the vaccines. We've learned that the Pfizer vaccine can be kept at warmer temperatures for a period of time. That's why youth are getting access to a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Pfizer vaccine has been well received by millions of people across Turtle Island. It gives great protection against COVID-19. This includes variants. And it can help youth take a step closer to their normal lives.

COVID-19 vaccines are a great choice for many people. It can be a great choice for adults, youth over 12. The vaccine can give good protection to those who are pregnant or breastfeeding. And can help protect people with chronic health conditions. If you have any questions about the vaccine, talk to your nurse or doctor. They are familiar with your medical history and help guide you.



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Now is the time to help prepare youth for the COVID-19 vaccine. It is also important to keep following the advice of your public health leadership. Stay home as much as you can. And follow the public health measures in your community.

This brings us to the end. If you have more questions, talk to your healthcare provider. You can also send a message to [acwinfo@slfnha.com](mailto:acwinfo@slfnha.com).

To learn more about Operation Remote Immunity 2.0, talk to a member of your community pandemic response team.

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