



Sioux Lookout  
First Nations  
Health Authority

# CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

June 9, 2021

COVID-19 vaccine is one of the keys to stopping the spread of COVID-19. The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine was approved for use in Canada on December 23, 2020. Canadians started getting vaccine on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. ***Here are some questions people often ask. Learn the answers and be prepared.***

#### How does the Moderna mRNA vaccine work?

The Moderna vaccine is an mRNA vaccine. This stands for ‘messenger ribonucleic acid’ or ‘messenger RNA’. Messenger RNA is a tiny molecule that carries instructions. Its job is to tell cells how to make proteins. “Health Canada describes mRNA vaccines as follows. mRNA vaccines teach your cells how to make a protein that will create an immune response. The vaccines do this without using the live coronavirus that causes COVID-19. After getting the vaccine, your body will start making antibodies. The antibodies made will help fight an infection if COVID-19 enters your body in the future.”



Learn more about mRNA vaccines here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/mrna-vaccine-basics.html>

#### Is the Moderna vaccine effective?

Yes. In people younger than 65, it is 94.1% effective in preventing moderate and severe cases of COVID-19. The amount of protection for people 65 and older is a little less – 86.4%. In time, we will know more about how long it protects for, and if a booster dose is needed.

We are still learning about COVID-19 and vaccines. This information is accurate as of June 9, 2021.



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### How is this vaccine given?

It is for people 18+ years of age. You will get 2 doses of the vaccine from 28 days up to 4 months apart. The level of protection increases up to two weeks after your second dose.

### What are the common side effects?

Common side effects include pain or tenderness and redness in your arm where you got the needle. Less common side effects include tiredness, headache, body pain, chills, nausea, vomiting, and a low fever. You may also get swelling in your armpit on the side where you got your needle. All of these common side effects go away on their own in a day or so.

Side effects can happen after either dose but may be more after the second dose. If your side effects are more severe than this, see your community health nurse right away. Serious side effects are rare.

### Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. There is no way to catch COVID-19 from this vaccine because it is not made with the virus. It only uses information from the virus. If you are **already** infected with COVID-19 when you get your vaccine, it cannot protect you from getting sick. If you do get COVID-19 after being vaccinated, you will likely not have severe symptoms.

### I already had COVID-19. Should I still have the vaccine?

Yes, you should still be vaccinated. Talk with your health team first if you are ill with COVID-19 now, or if you were in the past 3 months.

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### **If I am pregnant or breastfeeding, can I have the vaccine?**

Yes. Pregnant women are in the top priority of those who should be vaccinated. Studies show that protective antibodies are passed from mom to baby through breastmilk starting around 2 weeks up until 6 weeks after COVID-19 vaccination.

### **I have allergies. Can I have the vaccine?**

If you had an allergic reaction to the first dose, or are allergic to any ingredients in the vaccine, it is not recommended you get it. There are other vaccines available. Talk, with your community health physician.

### **After I have the vaccine, can I return to 'normal' life?**

Even after getting the vaccine, keep following the public health measures. Keep your distance. Wear a mask. Keep your hands clean. There will always be people among us who are not able to be vaccinated, or who are at risk due to medical conditions, age, or pregnancy. They still need to be protected. But things are shifting. The more people are vaccinated, the less the virus will be able to spread. There will be changes to public health measures as the number of cases of COVID-19 goes down and stay down.

### **Does it matter if I get Moderna or another vaccine?**

It is important to be vaccinated as soon as possible so that you are protected from COVID-19. All of the COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in Canada will prevent severe COVID-19 illness, and so they are all very good options. If you are over 18, you can have either Moderna or Pfizer vaccines for your second dose, whatever is available.



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**To learn more, write us at:** [ACWinfo@slfnha.com](mailto:ACWinfo@slfnha.com)

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phacaspc/documents/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/summary-interchangeability-authorized-covid-19-vaccines-en.pdf>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines/moderna.html#a11>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/moderna/moderna-faqs.html>

<https://covid-vaccine.canada.ca/info/pdf/moderna-covid-19-vaccine-pm1.pdf>

<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/moderna-covid-19-vaccine>

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/infants-can-benefit-if-breastfeeding-mothers-are-given-a-covid-19-vaccine>