

Things to know about the COVID Vaccine



A guide to learn why vaccines matter



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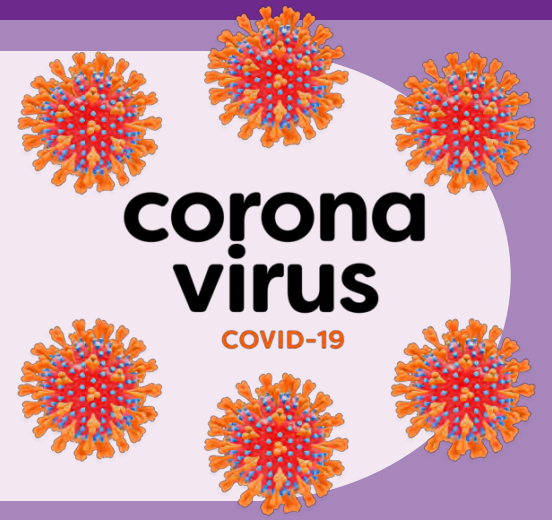
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What is COVID?

COVID-19, or simply COVID, is an infection caused by the coronavirus.



COVID spreads when someone who has the virus coughs, sneezes, or talks to another person.



Some people might have the virus and not know it, but can still spread it to others.



People who get COVID might have a cough, runny nose, have trouble breathing, a fever, chills, tiredness, and might not be able to taste or smell very well.



Some people with COVID get very sick and can die, some people get a little bit sick and some people may not feel sick at all.

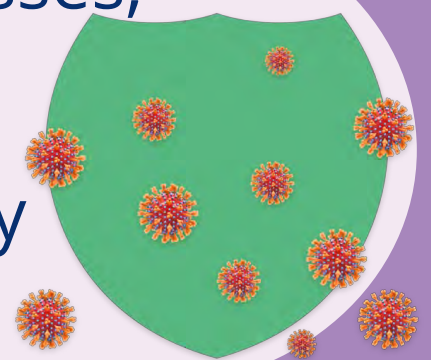


What is a vaccine?

Scientists have made vaccines to protect you and other people from getting viruses, like the coronavirus.



We already get vaccines for other illnesses, like the flu shot, or a tetanus shot. The COVID vaccine will make your body stronger to fight COVID.

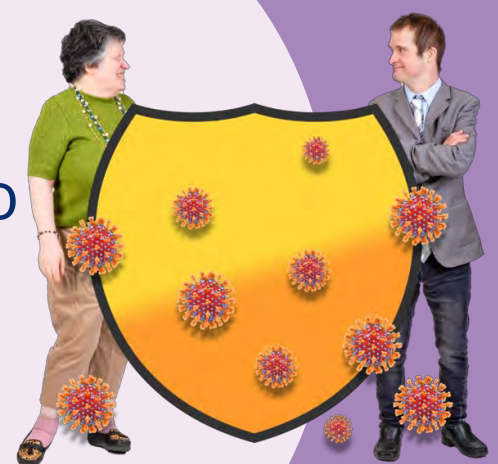


Doctors think less people will get sick with COVID if more people have the vaccine.



How does the vaccine work?

The COVID vaccine gives your body a recipe to make part of the virus. Your immune system then makes antibodies and learns to fight the virus. If you are exposed to COVID, your body makes more of these antibodies to fight the virus and help you not get sick.



Is the vaccine safe?

Yes, the vaccine is safe.

Doctors and scientists have done lots of work to make sure it is safe to use.

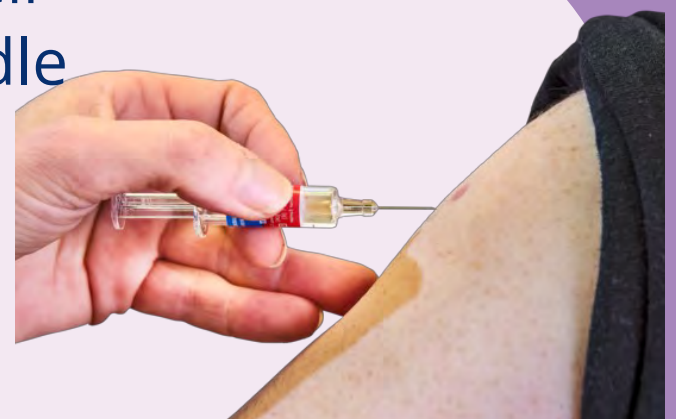


How did they do research to test if the vaccine works?

Scientists tried out the vaccine with lots of people. They gave all the people in the tests a needle.



Some people had the vaccine in their needle and some people got a needle that didn't have a vaccine in it. Then everyone watched how they were feeling, if they got COVID and if they had any side effects.



Then the scientists looked at what happened to the people in both groups. Almost all the people who got the vaccine didn't get sick.



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Is the vaccine only for people who have COVID now or had COVID before?

The vaccine is for anyone who could get the virus. This includes people who had the virus before and people who have not had the virus.



There are some people who should not get the vaccine:

- If you are less than 16 years old.
- If you have any symptoms that make you think you might have COVID, you should not get the vaccine right now.
- If you have had any other vaccines recently, you need to wait **2 weeks** before getting the COVID vaccine.
- If you are allergic to any of the things used to make this vaccine.

If you aren't sure if you can get this vaccine, you need to talk to your doctor.



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I take some medications. Does the vaccine mix up with my medications?



Most people who take different medications don't need to worry about how their medications mix with the vaccine. This is a good question to ask your doctor.

Can I be allergic to the vaccine?

- Most people will not be allergic to the vaccine.
- If you have experienced a very bad allergic reaction to a vaccine before, you should talk to your doctor about this.
- Scientists think the vaccine is still safe for people who have been allergic to other vaccines. That is because what is inside this vaccine is different than what is inside other vaccines.
- There are some ingredients inside vaccines that a few people are allergic to. You can check if those ingredients are in this vaccine by talking to your doctor.



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Who is paying for the vaccine?

Will there be a problem with my disability support payments from the government (ODSP) if I get the vaccine?

The Government of Canada is paying for everyone's vaccine.

You do not have to pay for the vaccine.

If you get the vaccine, it will not change or make problems with your disability support payments from the government (ODSP).



Who will get the vaccine first?

- Some people will get the vaccine faster than other people. This is because it is very hard for them to stay safe from COVID and if they get the virus, that would be very bad for them (they might get very sick).
- Right now, people who work in health care and see lots of patients who might have COVID, and people who live in long-term care and retirement homes are getting the vaccine.
- Vaccines are also going to people who are Indigenous and live on reserves.
- Adults who are 80 and older will get the vaccine quickly.
- The government is updating the list of who will get the vaccine quickly as they learn more about who needs it most.



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How do I decide if I want to get the vaccine?

- The best person to talk about the vaccine is your doctor. You can make an appointment as part of a winter health check up and ask about if the vaccine is good for you.
- They can help you understand all of the information you need to think about, so that you can decide if you want the vaccine.
- People that you trust, like your family, friends, or workers, can help you talk to the doctor.



- Lots of people are saying different things about the vaccine and sometimes the information might not be right.
- It is important to know how to find good information that you can trust. Your doctor is the best person to help with this.
- This information sheet is also helpful.

