

General Information on COVID-19 vaccine safety

- Like any medication or supplement (including vitamins), vaccines can cause side effects and reactions.
- after being vaccinated, it's common to have mild and harmless side effects. These can last a few hours or days after vaccination.
- This is the body's natural response, as it's working hard to build immunity against the disease. This is known as the inflammatory response or reaction. These reactions should not disrupt daily activities and can be treated if needed.
- Common vaccine side effects may include mild fever or redness, soreness or swelling in the arm or leg where the vaccine was given. Children may also be more fussy than usual.
- You can take medicine to help with any pain or to lower a fever. Ask your health care provider what they recommend.
- Other rare reactions that could occur after a vaccine are - a fever above 40°C (104°F) or swelling and an itchy rash where the vaccine was given
- There's a small chance of an allergic reaction to a vaccine. This type of reaction is estimated at 1 to 10 cases for every 1 million doses of vaccine given. This is rare and is called **anaphylaxis**. Anaphylaxis usually happens shortly after the vaccine is given and is treatable.
- Signs of an anaphylaxis allergic reaction to a vaccine include itchy rash, swelling of the face, sudden low blood pressure, abdominal pain and vomiting or sneezing, coughing and difficulty breathing
- In children, signs of allergic reaction could also include fussiness, irritability & unusual sleepiness
- This is why your health care provider will ask you to stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after vaccination. This is to make sure any abnormal or unexpected reactions are monitored and dealt with quickly.
- The health care provider will then report the information to the CLSC. These reports are tracked and investigated.
- Researchers and scientists around the world have proven [there's no link between vaccines and autism](#). In 1998, *The Lancet* (a British medical journal) published a study conducted by former British doctor Andrew Wakefield. This study wrongly claimed that the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine caused autism. Unfortunately, the study has been widely quoted since then. It was later found to be completely false and was [retracted by The Lancet](#).
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, Health Canada will monitor and assess issues and collaborate with partners around the world, such as the World Health Organization and companies are also required to continuously monitor the use of their health products and communicate risks to health care professionals and the public
- Vaccines help get your immune system ready to protect against a disease without making you sick.
- The risk of complications from getting the real disease is far greater than the risk of side effects from vaccines. For example, if you get measles naturally, you have a 1 in 1,000 chance of developing encephalitis (a severe, life threatening swelling of the brain). Your chance of developing encephalitis from the vaccine is less than 1 in 1 million.