

# COVID-19 Vaccine

## Frequently Asked Questions



**Question - What are the possible side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**Answer –** Side effects are more common after the second dose and are generally short-lived (from one to two days at most). The main possible side effects are:

- Pain at the injection site
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Joint pain
- Chills



There are some rare cases of people who have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine and were immediately treated by medical staff. Other vaccines can also cause allergic reactions in some people. That is why the medical staff who administer the vaccine are trained to respond appropriately and quickly in the event of an adverse reaction.

**Question – Can people with moderate or severe allergies to specific products, including those who use an Epi-Pen get vaccinated?**

**Answer –** Yes, if the allergies in question do not involve any of the vaccine components, the person can safely get the vaccine. With regard to the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, the contraindications related to allergies pertain to people who had an allergic reaction to the component - polyethylene glycol (PEG). This is a lipid (fat) that is a component in other injectable medicines and are used in COVID vaccines to protect the active ingredient (mRNA) and help it penetrate cells. It is within cells that the mRNA can go to work priming the immune system. To put things in perspective, out of the hundreds of thousands of vaccines already given, the compound is found to be the cause of the six allergic reactions to date. Meanwhile, for every 100 cases of COVID-19 in Canada, there are 3 deaths.

**Question – Are vaccines safe given how quickly they were developed?**

**Answer –** Yes. Canada's vaccine safety standards are very strict. Before being used in Canada, vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective. Only vaccines approved by Health Canada can be used. Even after a vaccine has been approved, health organizations continue to monitor its use to guarantee its safety and efficacy.

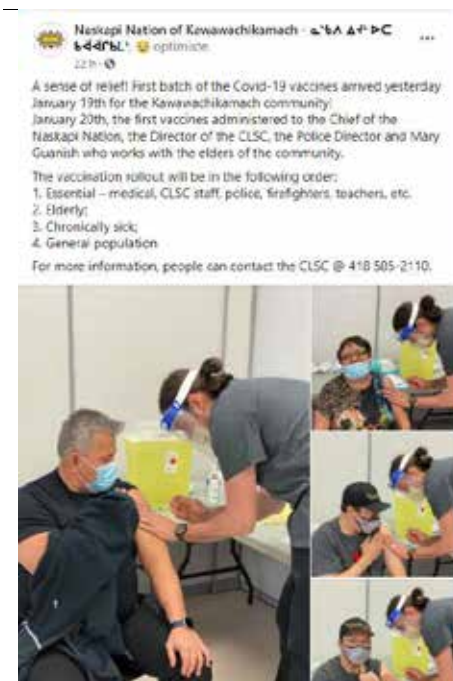
Normally, it takes several years to develop a vaccine. However, as a result of new technologies, major international research investment and worldwide collaboration, it was possible to develop a vaccine in a much shorter time.

**Question** – Given the issue surrounding vaccine availability, is it preferable to wait?

**Answer** – You shouldn't wait before getting the vaccine, since the first dose provides a high degree of protection, even if it is unclear how long the protection lasts. Given the large number of outbreaks that are occurring across the country and around the world, it is preferable to get the first dose of the vaccine as soon as possible. Also, more contagious versions of the coronavirus are popping up all over the world including in Canada. Therefore, it really is a race of the vaccines against the new variants

**Question** - Are there long term effects from getting ill from the vaccine?

**Answer** - No, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are not live vaccines and cannot cause infection. Since they do not contain the virus, they cannot cause COVID-19.



Highlights from last week's vaccination roll out at the Anishnabe Long Term Care Centre.



*Thank you to our wonderful Nursing Staff!*