

COVID-19 vaccines

Updated May 10, 2021

To find out which age groups are currently being invited to book their vaccine appointment, visit gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated

Vancouver Coastal Health is working with the Province of B.C. to implement the COVID-19 Immunization Plan. Learn how to register for an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccination. Please check this page regularly as information is updated frequently.

Every person in B.C. 18 years of age and older should register for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment:



Register online at getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca



Call **1-833-838-2323**

Phone line is open daily 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

You can also register in-person at all Service BC offices. Office hours vary by location. [Find a Service BC office close to me.](#)

After registering, watch for an email, phone call or SMS text message with more information on how to book your appointment. You may not get a notice to book your appointment on the same day you register. The province will contact you when you are eligible to book a vaccine appointment based on three factors:

- Your age
- [B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan phases](#)
- Vaccine supply

For more information about registering and booking an appointment, visit gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.

Be sure to register to be notified for your second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine

If you got your first dose of vaccine:

- Before the provincial booking system launched on April 6
- As a health-care worker or priority frontline worker before May 3
- At a pharmacy
- In long-term care or assisted living
- At a community outreach clinic in Whistler or Squamish

You must register at www.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated in order to be notified when it's time for your second dose.

Registration is open to anyone born in 2003 or earlier (18+)

- This includes all VCH residents and Indigenous peoples
- If you are clinically extremely vulnerable, born in 2005 or earlier (age 16+) and have received a patient invitation letter. Learn more at gov.bc.ca/cevCOVID

Pregnant people born in 2005 or earlier (16+)

To book a vaccine, people who are pregnant can:

- Register at gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated if they have not done so already,
- Phone 1-833-838-2323 and identify as being pregnant. Online booking for pregnant people is not available.

Priority neighbourhoods

If you're born in 2003 or earlier (18+) and live in one of the following high-transmission neighbourhoods, register now to receive an appointment notification:

- Hastings Sunrise
- Grandview Woodland
- Vancouver Kensington
- Vancouver Renfrew-Collingwood
- Vancouver Sunset
- Victoria Fraserview
- Cedar Cottage

- Killarney
- Squamish
- Britannia Beach
- Pinecrest Estates
- D'Arcy

Learn more about [priority neighbourhoods](#).

Essential workers

For information on how eligible frontline and essential workers can book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment, visit vch.ca/frontlinevaccine

AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine for people born in 1991 and earlier (age 30+), book directly through a participating pharmacy.

Book directly at a participating pharmacy to receive an AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine or to join a waitlist. The participating pharmacies are listed on the [BC Pharmacy Association](#) website. The list of pharmacies will be updated regularly. Please also register through the [Provincial online tool](#) to ensure you are notified when it is time to book your second dose.

Preparing for your appointment

- Check your scheduled appointment date, time and location.
- Please arrive on time for your appointment and avoid arriving early. This will help us follow public health guidelines, maintain physical distancing and keep everyone safe.
- Wear a short-sleeve shirt as the vaccine will be delivered to your upper arm.
- Dress in layers to stay warm and bring an umbrella if it is raining as some outdoor waiting areas are uncovered.
- You will be monitored after receiving your vaccine for 15 minutes.

Questions?

Questions about COVID-19

Non-medical information about COVID-19 is available through Service BC in more than 120 languages at 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) or visit gov.bc.ca/covid19.

Where you can get vaccinated

Download and print the maps below or see it on [Google Maps](#).

- [COVID-19 vaccination clinic map: Sea-to-Sky, Sunshine Coast and Central Coast](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination clinic map: Vancouver, North Vancouver, West Vancouver and Richmond](#)

VCH Aboriginal Health vaccination clinics are available across our communities for Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) peoples. These locations have specific cultural elements, as well as cultural and ceremonial plans in place. All VCH clinics are welcoming to Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) peoples.

Frequently Asked Questions - About COVID-19 vaccines

Vaccines don't just protect the people getting vaccinated, they protect everyone around them, too. The more people in a community who are vaccinated, and therefore protected from COVID-19, the harder it is for it to spread.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Canada has a very thorough system to approve new vaccines for human use. Only vaccines that have been shown to be safe are approved. Once approved for use, all vaccines are closely monitored by public health officials and Health Canada for their safety. The COVID-19 vaccines currently used in Canada have been administered to millions of people around the world and have been shown to be both safe and effective.

Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine. However, if you were exposed to the virus before you received your vaccine, you may be incubating the virus and not realize you have COVID-19 until after you are vaccinated. It takes about two weeks to gain protection from the COVID-19 vaccine. This means if you contracted the virus before getting the vaccine, or within the two-week period following vaccination, you may still get sick from COVID-19. If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 after you've been vaccinated, use [B.C. self-assessment tool](#) to determine if you need to be tested.

Are there side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

It is common to experience some side effects after you get the vaccine. Side effects are typically mild to moderate and usually go away on their own. Learn more about what to expect when you get a COVID-19 vaccine by visiting gov.bc.ca/covid19.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because about one in a million people can have a serious allergic reaction, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. Should this reaction occur, your health-care provider is prepared to treat it. Emergency treatment includes administration of epinephrine (adrenaline) and transfer by ambulance to the nearest emergency department. If symptoms develop after you leave the clinic, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

If you have any concerns about the vaccine related to medications you are taking or allergies, please speak with your family doctor, nurse practitioner or call 8-1-1.

How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines?

Fourteen days after receiving one dose of either vaccine, protection is greater than 90 per cent. After two doses, both vaccines are about 95 per cent effective in preventing COVID-19. The duration of protection is not yet known for one or two doses of the vaccine but is being studied. In general, some vaccines provide lifelong immunity, while others such as tetanus only work for 10 years. Learn more about the vaccines for COVID-19 at gov.bc.ca/covid19.

How will I know when I can get the vaccine?

The Province, working closely with each local health authority, will be alerting members of the public when they become eligible to receive the vaccine.

To facilitate access to as many eligible residents as possible, we are breaking down vaccine appointment booking times by age groups. To find out what age group is currently eligible, please visit our main [COVID-19 vaccine page](#) as this information changes regularly.

What vaccines are there for COVID-19?

Four COVID-19 vaccines have been authorized for use in Canada: the Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Pfizer and Moderna are already in use, both are mRNA vaccines.

How do the COVID-19 vaccines work?

The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines work by delivering genetic instructions from the virus that causes COVID-19 to our own cells so we produce the spike protein of the virus. These proteins will

create an immune response. They teach your body how to recognize and fight future infections. Learn more on the vaccines for COVID-19 by visiting gov.bc.ca/covid19.

Do I need to continue wearing a mask after I receive my vaccine?

Yes, public health orders, restrictions and guidelines remain in place for everyone, regardless if you have received the vaccine. After immunization, it will still be important to wash your hands, adhere to physical distancing guidelines, wear a mask and stay home when sick.

We still don't know for certain how long the protection lasts from COVID-19 vaccines or how well they work in preventing asymptomatic infection or reducing transmission of the virus. This means that all current enhanced safety measures and COVID-19 protocols will stay in place until a significant percentage of the population has been vaccinated for COVID-19 or until it is deemed safe to relax those rules.

Who should not get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Nearly everyone will be able to safely receive the vaccine, although a very small number of people may need to avoid vaccination due to [severe allergies](#) to parts of the vaccine. Learn more about consideration for the vaccine by visiting gov.bc.ca/covid19.

I'm unable to leave my home – is there a way for me to get vaccinated?

If you are unable to leave your home for a vaccination appointment, we can help. Please call the appointment phone line and inform the call centre representative that you are unable to attend a clinic. You will be referred to our Home Health team who will call you back for an assessment to receive a home visit.

Can I travel once I receive the vaccine?

Provincial health orders and guidelines remain in place for everyone, even if you have received the vaccine. Learn more about [province-wide restrictions](#).

If I am eligible to be vaccinated but I am not a resident of B.C., can I still be vaccinated?

Yes, if you are eligible to be vaccinated in the current age group but are not a resident of B.C., you are invited to book an appointment using the toll-free vaccine appointment booking line. You will then be able to choose to attend a vaccination clinic in your local community to receive a free vaccine. In this case, you will not need to provide a B.C. Personal Health Number or proof of residence in B.C.

I have concerns about the AstraZeneca vaccine. Where can I get the latest information on this?

More information about the AstraZeneca vaccine can be found on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#).

Resources

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccines and B.C.'s immunization plan, visit gov.bc.ca/covid19. Visit our [frequently asked questions page](#) for questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and booking a vaccination appointment.