

Description

The Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine provides protection against COVID-19. It will not prevent illness caused by other viruses. The vaccination will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. Like all medicine, no vaccine is completely effective and it takes a few weeks for your body to build up protection from the vaccine. Some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should lessen the severity of any infection.

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection. The vaccine will reduce your chances of becoming seriously ill. However, you may still need to follow Public Health guidance including wearing the correct personal protection equipment such as mask, handwashing and social distancing. This is important because although you may not become ill from exposure to the virus it is possible for you to infect others.

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements

Children age 5-17 years will be offered two doses of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine at this time between 8-12 weeks apart.

Children age 5-11 will be provided the paediatric version of the Pfizer vaccine. This has been specifically formulated for this age group and corresponds to one third of the normal dose for persons 12 years and older

Who should be vaccinated?

- **All persons (5 years and older should get the COVID-19 vaccine).** This is especially important for people at higher risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 and their close contacts, including healthcare personnel and close contact of children younger than 5 years.
- **Persons at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are:** People (60 years of age and older). Persons with certain health conditions such as heart lungs or kidney disease or a weakened immune system as COVID-19 may worsen existing medical conditions.
- **Even if you have been sick with COVID-19 and have recovered you are encouraged to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine.** Due to the life threatening complications associated with COVID-19 and known cases of reinfection. You are encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine leaving at least four weeks from the time of infection.

Who should not be vaccinated or who should wait:

Some persons should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician these includes:

- Any person with a history of immediate –onset of severe allergic reaction to a vaccine, food or medicine should consult with a doctor before taking the vaccine.
- A second dose of the vaccine should not be given to those who have experienced immediate –onset of severe allergic reaction to the first dose of the Pfizer vaccination.
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with fever (more than 38 degrees C) should wait to be vaccinated.
- If you have an acute medical condition, consult your doctor.

Possible side effects

Common Problems

- Soreness, redness or swelling of vaccine site
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Chills
- Fever
- Muscle Aches

These usually occur soon after the vaccine and last one to two days

Uncommon or rare problems

- Discomfort or feeling ill
- Lymphadenopathy (swollen or enlarged lymph nodes)
- Life –threatening allergic reactions from vaccines are rare. When they do occur it is usually within a few minutes to a few hours of receiving the vaccine.
- Myocarditis or Pericarditis (inflammation of the heart), usually a few days after the second vaccination. Most people recovered and felt better following rest and simple treatments. You should seek medical advice urgently if you experience:
 - Chest pain
 - Shortness of breath
 - Feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart

Treatment of side effects

Treatment usually involves treatment of symptoms with a pain reliever / antipyretic like Panadol /Tylenol (Acetaminophen).

If you experience any side effects, please report to the **COVID-19 Medical Hotline at (264) 235-4357 or (264) 235-HELP**

For further information or if unsure if you are eligible for vaccine talk to your healthcare provider.