



Information on the COVID-19 Vaccine

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a virus (illness) that can make you really sick. It can give you flu-like symptoms with a high fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath. It can attack your lungs and cause chest infections (pneumonia) and possibly death.



Why is the COVID-19 vaccine important?

The COVID-19 vaccine works just like the flu needle. It helps your body fight the virus and protects you from getting really sick. It reduces the risk of you spreading the illness to the community, including your family and friends.

You will need two doses of the vaccine for it to work the right way.

The person giving you the vaccine will let you know when you need to get your second dose (for the Pfizer vaccine this is 3 to 6 weeks after your first dose).

Which vaccine will I receive?

You will be offered the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) unless there is a medical reason for you not to be given this vaccine. Most Australians can safely receive the Pfizer vaccine, and it is the preferred vaccine for people aged 12 to 59 years.



Giving your consent

If you agree (say yes) to getting your COVID-19 vaccine, the person giving you your vaccination will ask you to **give your consent** (permission to give you the vaccine needle).

When you give your consent (say yes), you are saying it is okay for someone to vaccinate you (give you the COVID-19 needle).



Remember it is up to you. You can choose to have the vaccine or you can choose not to have the vaccine if you don't want to.

You can talk to your health clinic, doctor or nurse for more information about the COVID-19 vaccination.



Side effects

After you have your vaccination, you might feel some symptoms or side effects. Most side effects are not serious and will go away in a couple of days.

Common side effects can include:

- pain or swelling in your arm where the needle went in
- fever (feeling hot and sweaty)
- sore muscles or joints
- headache
- chills (feeling cold and shaky)
- tiredness.



Less common side effects include:

- feeling sick in the stomach
- not sleeping well
- leg pain.



If you have any side effects, you can take simple pain medication like paracetamol or ibuprofen.

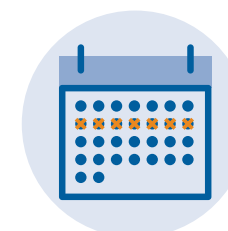
For symptoms that are not urgent, you can see your usual health clinic, doctor or nurse.

You should call 000 or seek urgent medical care if you experience severe symptoms after vaccination, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing, a fast heartbeat or collapsing.



Do I still need to get the flu shot?

The COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against the flu, so you still need to get your flu shot. Wait at least 7 days between getting your flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine.



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