

# COVID-19 Vaccine

## What To Do If You Experience An Adverse Reaction After Receiving A COVID-19 Vaccine



Health Canada has authorized a number of vaccines to protect our families, communities and ourselves against COVID-19. The approval of the vaccines is supported by evidence that they are safe and effective. However, as with other vaccines and medicines, you may experience adverse reactions or side effects. Most side effects are not serious and should go away on their own. Some of the side effects of the vaccine are similar to symptoms of COVID-19. The vaccine will NOT cause or give you COVID-19.

The most common side effect from the COVID-19 vaccine that have been identified so far are soreness where the vaccine was given, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. These side effects are common a day or two after getting the COVID-19 vaccine and mean the vaccine is working. Your body is producing new antibodies to protect against the real disease.

Symptoms of COVID-19 such as a sore throat, runny nose, cough or other breathing problems are NOT expected adverse reactions to the vaccine. If you experience ANY of these symptoms, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.

Other symptoms that may occur are swelling and redness where the vaccine was given, nausea, enlarged lymph nodes and feeling unwell.

**ADVERSE REACTIONS ARE USUALLY MILD OR MODERATE AND GO AWAY ON THEIR OWN WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF APPEARING.** Take medicines like acetaminophen or ibuprofen to treat pain or fever, if they occur after vaccination. Unless these side effects persist or get worse, you do not need to see a health care provider.

### BEFORE you leave the place of vaccination

It's important to stay in the vaccination site for at least 15 minutes after getting the COVID-19 vaccine in the *unlikely* event of a severe allergic reaction (including hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips). You may be asked to wait up to half an hour if you have a history of allergic reaction to other vaccines, medicines, food or other substances.

There may be a special, designated post-vaccination waiting area in your vaccination location. You need to remain in this area for observation and easy access to assistance should you require it, for the duration that you are advised by your immunization provider.

When the waiting time has elapsed without any reaction, the likelihood of you developing any reaction to the vaccine is much lower. You may then go about the rest of your day.

### AFTER you leave the place of vaccination

If you experience an adverse event or medical condition of concern after you leave the place of vaccination, contact your health care provider or call Health Links – Info Santé in Winnipeg at **204-788-8200**, or toll free elsewhere in Manitoba at **1-888-315-9257**.

**Severe adverse events after receiving the vaccine are rare. If you develop any severe adverse events or a severe allergic reaction (including hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing), call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department or health centre right away. Tell them you've received a COVID-19 vaccine.**

After attending to your adverse reaction, your health care provider may complete an adverse event report. Your health care provider or somebody from your health region will then be in touch with you to advise you regarding a second dose of the vaccine, if appropriate.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccines, go to <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/> and [www.manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/index.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/index.html).

## **RARE EVENTS AFTER GETTING THE ASTRAZENECA/COVISHIELD VACCINE**

There have been reports recently of very rare thrombosis (blood clots) in combination with thrombocytopenia (low blood platelets) following administration of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine. Health Canada's review of the available information concluded that a link between the use of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine and the risk of these blood clots with low platelets is possible.

If you have received the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine, symptoms to watch out for within six weeks (42 days) of immunization include new onset unexplained severe headache, seizure, swelling of lower extremities, reddened/discoLOURED/warm skin, abdominal pain, sudden onset shortness of breath or chest pain, difficulty with speech, or weakness to one side of body or face. If you experience any of these or other severe symptoms, seek immediate medical attention, and be sure to tell your health care provider that you received the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine.

**The overall benefits of the vaccine in protecting Canadians from COVID-19 continue to outweigh its potential risks.**

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