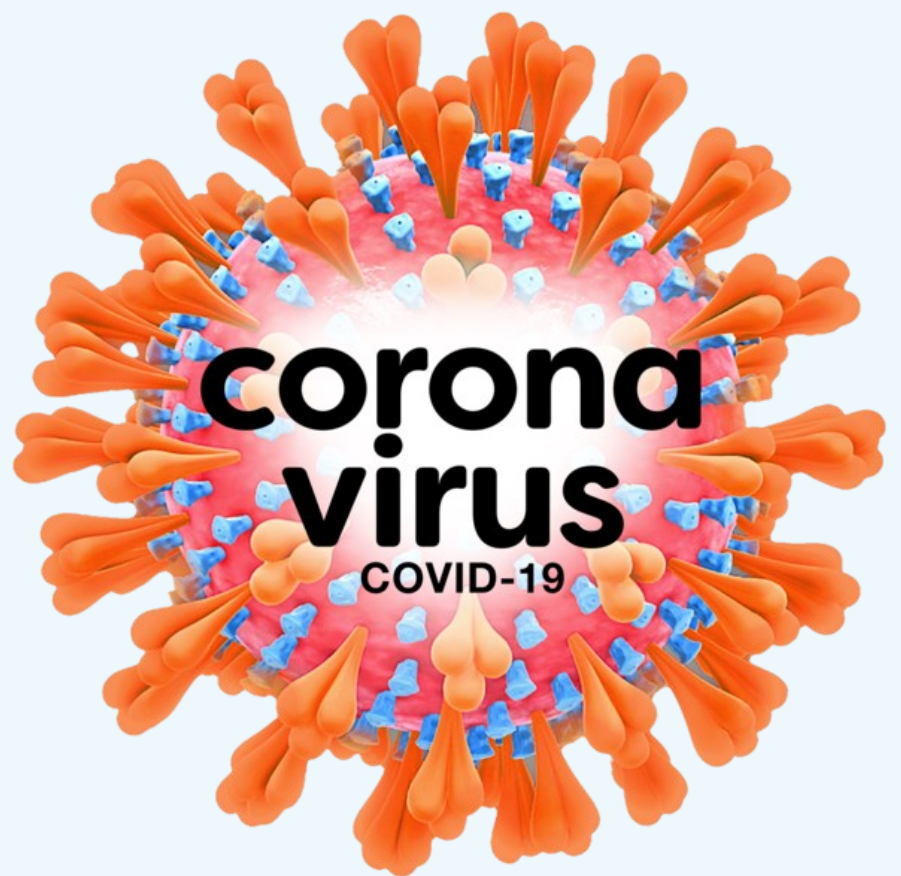


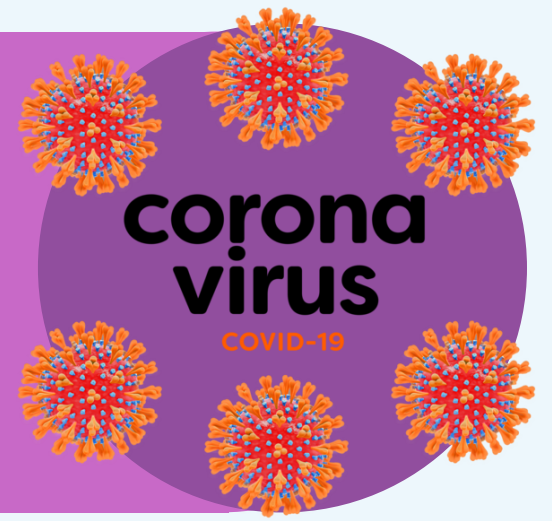
What you should know about the COVID-19 Vaccine



*A plain language guide to learn
why vaccines matter*

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infection caused by the coronavirus.



COVID-19 often spreads by airborne transmission by an infected person coughing, sneezing and even talking to another person. Wearing a mask and physical distancing are important to keep safe.



COVID-19 also spreads by touch. Washing / sanitizing your hands often is also important. Some people might have the virus and not know it, but can still spread it to others.



Common symptoms of COVID-19 are coughing, having trouble breathing, a fever, chills, tiredness, and losing your sense of taste or smell.



Some people with COVID get very sick and can die, some people get a little bit sick and some people may not feel sick at all.

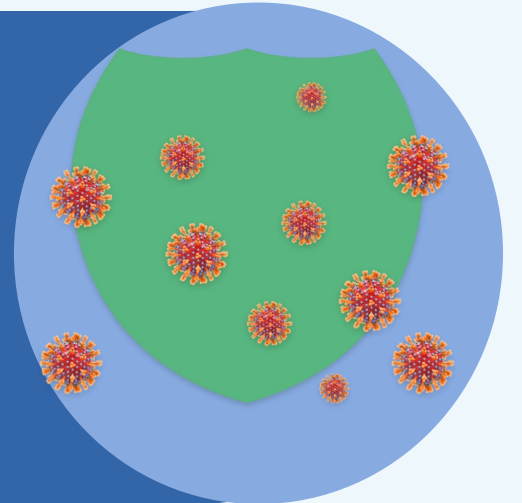


What is a vaccine?

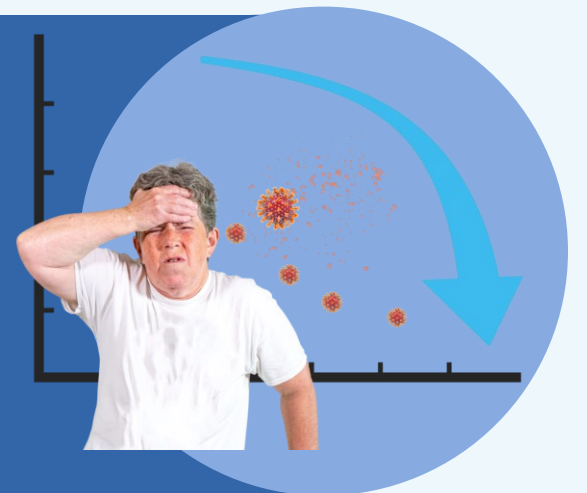
Scientists have made vaccines to protect you and other people from getting from viruses, like the Coronavirus.



The vaccine will make your body stronger to fight COVID.

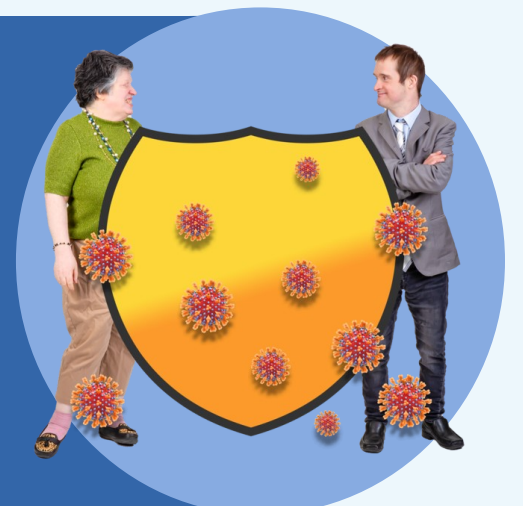


Doctors and scientists think less people will get sick with COVID if more people have the vaccine.



How does the vaccine work?

The vaccine helps your body make antibodies so its ready to fight the virus. This can reduce your risk of developing COVID-19 and make your symptoms milder if you do get it.



Is the vaccine safe?

Yes, the vaccine is safe.

Doctors and scientists have done lots of work to make sure it is safe to use.



How did they do research to test if the vaccine works?

Scientists tried out the vaccine with lots of people. They gave all the people in the tests a needle.



Some people had the vaccine in their needle and some people got a needle that didn't have a vaccine in it. The people getting the needle and the people giving the needle didn't know who got what.



Then the scientists looked at what happened to the people in both groups. Hardly any of the people who got the vaccine got COVID-19, but some people who didn't get the vaccine did get sick.



Is the vaccine only for people who have COVID now or had COVID before?

No. The vaccine is for anyone who could get the virus.

This includes people who had the virus before and people who have not had the virus.



There are some people who should not get the vaccine:

- If you are less than 16 years old.
- If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, you should not get the vaccine right now.
- If you have had any other vaccines, you need to wait **2 weeks** before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you have a weakened immune system (*if you have immunosuppression*).
- If you are allergic to any of the things used to make this vaccine.

If you aren't sure if you can get this vaccine, you need to talk to your doctor.

I take some medications. Does the vaccine mix up with my medications and make them work less well?



Most people who take different medications don't need to worry about how their medications mix with the vaccine.

This is a good question to ask your doctor.

Can I be allergic to the vaccine?

- Most people will not be allergic to the vaccine.
- If you have experienced a very bad allergic reaction to a vaccine before, you should talk to your doctor about this.
- Scientists think the vaccine is still safe for people who have been allergic to other vaccines.



Who is paying for the vaccine?

Will there be a problem with my disability support payments from the government (ODSP) if I get the vaccine?

The Government of Canada is paying for everyone's vaccine.

You do not have to pay for the vaccine.

If you get the vaccine, it will not change or make problems with your disability support payments from the government (ODSP)



Who will get the vaccine first?

- Some people will get the vaccine faster than other people. This is because it is very hard for them stay safe from COVID and if they get the virus, that would be very bad for them (they might get very sick).
- The government has said that everyone who wants a vaccine in Canada will be able to get it by the end of 2021
- Right now, people who work in health care and see lots of patients who might have COVID-19, and people who live in long-term care homes are getting the vaccine.
- Soon vaccines will also go to people who are Indigenous and live on reserves.
- Adults who are 80 and older will get the vaccine quickly.



How do I decide if I want to get the vaccine?

- The best person to talk about the vaccine is your doctor. You can make an appointment as part of a winter health check up and ask about if the vaccine is good for you.
- You can also talk to people that you trust, like other healthcare providers, your family and other support providers in your life.
- They can help you understand the good things and any bad things you need to think about, so that you can decide if you want the vaccine.



- Lots of people are saying different things about the vaccine and sometimes the information might not be right.
- It is important to know how to find good information that is right about the vaccine. Your doctor is the best person to help with this.
- This information sheet is also helpful.

Why is it important for people with disabilities to get the vaccine?

- We have seen that people with disabilities
- are more likely to get very sick and are more likely to die when they get COVID.
 - Right now, there are many people with disabilities who are advised not to leave their homes and to only have in-person contact others they live with, and their front-line caregivers. Temporary separation from family and friends is very difficult for everyone.
 - After they get the vaccines, they will be able to do a little bit more safely.



For more information and a video where a doctor talks about the COVID-19, click here: <https://youtu.be/wt6roW5VCW0>