



January 29, 2021

## What You Need To Know About The Covid-19 Vaccine

### **When will the COVID-19 vaccine be available?**

Currently, only the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are available for use in Canada. Supply chains are still being sorted out throughout the Country and Province and exact dates and timelines are still being determined.

The Pikwakanagan Pandemic Team is working with Renfrew County Public Health officials and developing our community vaccination plan. We are committed to updating you about the vaccine availability as information is confirmed.

### **Who will receive the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Initial vaccine supply will be limited so not everyone will be able to be vaccinated right away. The COVID-19 vaccine will be given according to the provincial roll out priority listing.

Renfrew County Public Health Unit has prioritized Tennisco Manor (congregate living), high risk seniors and caregivers as a priority. The first clinic is January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Pikwakanagan has received a limited supply of the vaccine.

### **Why should I get vaccinated?**

COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and the best way to protect yourself and loved ones and your community from COVID-19 virus.

COVID-19 vaccines are one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread and reduce the impact of infectious diseases.

COVID-19 vaccine helps to build up your immunity to the virus, so your body will fight it off more easily if it affects you.

COVID -19 vaccine are an important tool to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus and allow us to resume 'normal' life.

**When a large percentage of the population becomes immune to COVID-19 it will slow down or stop the virus.**

### **How is the vaccination given?**

COVID-19 vaccines (such as the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines) are given in two doses, injected into a muscle in the upper arm.

### **Why do I have to receive two doses of the vaccine?**

The first shot starts building immunity, but it is not enough for protection. The second shot given a few weeks later is needed to get the most protection from the vaccine. Until that time, it is recommended to follow all

the public health measures (**continue to wash your hands regularly, stay home when sick, stay 2 metres apart, wear a face mask, and keep using good cough and surface hygiene, avoid gatherings**).

### **When is the second vaccine dose given?**

The second vaccine can be given within 21-28 days but may be recommended for up to 42 days.

### **Does the second dose of the vaccine have to be the same vaccine I was initially given?**

Yes. The COVID-19 vaccine products are not interchangeable; the second dose must be from the same manufacturer as your first dose.

### **Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?**

No. The vaccines that are being used do not contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine.

### **Is the vaccine safe?**

Both vaccines have undergone extensive clinical trials that tested for safety and efficacy. Ongoing studies on the vaccine indicate no serious side effects found to date according to Health Canada.

### **Can I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?**

As pregnant or breastfeeding women were not included in the vaccine clinical trials, there is not enough data to know if the vaccine is safe for pregnant or lactating women and as such COVID-19 vaccine is not routinely recommended at this time.

### **Can I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I am immunocompromised?**

Persons that have HIV, taking chemotherapy drugs or other immunosuppressive medication or therapies should be counselled about the vaccine safety profile and efficacies related to them. Persons with such conditions should seek advice from their medical practitioner.

### **Can I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I have an autoimmune condition?**

Persons with an autoimmune conditions who have no contraindications to vaccination may receive a vaccine.

### **What are the common side effects?**

Known side effects include one or more of the following symptoms: pain where the needle was given, redness and swelling, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, mild fever, swollen glands (less frequently). These types of side effects are expected and simply indicate that the vaccine is working to produce protection.

Symptoms of an allergic reaction include hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing. If you are concerned about any reaction you experience after receiving the vaccine, contact your health care provider.

### **What if I have a reaction, or an adverse event?**

After receiving the vaccine, you will be asked to wait in the clinic area for 15 minutes or longer to be monitored for any adverse reactions. Severe allergic reactions such as anaphylaxis are rare and are most likely to begin shortly after receiving the vaccine. If you experience a severe allergic reaction after leaving the clinic,

call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest hospital. Adverse Events After Immunization should be reported to your health care provider. This information is used to assess whether or not you should receive future vaccine doses and it helps to provide information about overall vaccine safety.

### **How effective is the vaccine, and when does the vaccine protection begin?**

Based on manufacturer data, Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine was found to be 94.6% effective against COVID-19 beginning 7 days after the second dose.

Moderna's vaccine was found to be 94.1% effective against COVID-19 after receiving two doses and 100% effective against severe COVID-19 disease.

### **Could I test positive for COVID-19 after receiving the vaccine?**

No, not as a result of the vaccine alone. The vaccines won't cause you to test positive on viral tests.

### **Do I need to continue wearing my mask after I receive the vaccine?**

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it is important for everyone to continue covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others. Building immunity takes time. Until vaccines are widely available for everyone to receive two doses, we must continue taking the necessary health precautions.

**“Together, we can do this. To learn more about the best ways to protect yourself and others and or get the facts about vaccines please visit [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus)”**

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