



LET'S DO THIS

COVID-19 Vaccines: Know the facts!

There is a lot of confusing and incorrect information being shared about COVID-19 vaccines. Always make sure you get the facts from reliable sources.

Three vaccines are available for use in Australia.

There are three vaccines approved for use in Australia: Pfizer (Comirnaty) vaccine, AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria) vaccine and Moderna (Spikevax) vaccine.

Evidence shows COVID-19 vaccines work including against the Delta variant

Evidence from around the world shows that vaccines work very well against COVID-19.

Two doses of a vaccine:

- Reduces the chance you will catch COVID-19 by around 60% - 80%.
- Gives you around 90% protection against needing to be admitted to hospital or dying from COVID-19.
- Reduces the spread of COVID-19 to others.

COVID-19 is very dangerous and spreads quickly. Even if you don't have symptoms or get sick, you can still pass the virus on to others. Vaccination will protect you and help reduce the spread of the virus. Getting vaccinated helps to protect your family, your friends and your community.

COVID-19 vaccines have not been developed too quickly to be safe

COVID-19 vaccines are built on many years of research, with scientists from around the world working together to ensure all testing and approval steps were taken.

All the vaccines available in Australia have been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA checks for safety, quality and effectiveness. COVID-19 vaccines must meet the same standards as any other vaccine approved for use in Australia.

If you are young and healthy, or have already had COVID-19, you should still get vaccinated

More than half the people with COVID-19 in NSW are under 40. Many young people have needed hospital or even intensive care because of COVID-19. You should get vaccinated to protect yourself, your family and friends.

COVID-19 spreads easily, and the Delta variant spreads more than twice as easily as the original virus. It can also cause worse illness in those that get it. This can put your family and friends at greater risk if you are infected. Vaccination will help protect you and those you love and get us back to doing the things we love.



The COVID-19 virus is much more dangerous than COVID-19 vaccines

COVID-19 vaccination will prevent severe illness and death in people of all ages. Serious reactions from the vaccines are extremely rare, which is why it's more important than ever to follow the health advice and protect our community.

There are no dangerous ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines

The TGA considers the safety and quality of everything in a vaccine before it can be used in Australia. Ingredients for available COVID-19 vaccines can be found on the [Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods](#).

Depending on the type of vaccine, ingredients may include:

- a protein component of a virus
- a piece of genetic code (DNA or mRNA)
- a very small dose of a weakened virus
- a substance to boost the immune response (an adjuvant)
- a small amount of preservative
- sterile saltwater (saline) for injections.



What is mRNA?

mRNA is made when the cell needs instructions to make proteins. DNA code is copied and shortened into messages called mRNA. The mRNA is transported into the cell. Once the mRNA arrives, the cell can produce proteins from these instructions. Once the instruction is read, the mRNA breaks down and clears from the cell.

mRNA is not a new invention from the lab. It's how the body has been making proteins, the basic building block of life, since humans have existed.

The COVID-19 Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are mRNA vaccines.



None of the COVID-19 vaccines approved in Australia:

- contain egg or animal products
- can affect or interact with your DNA in any way
- contain anything that can track you
- are unsuitable people from some religions or faiths.

COVID-19 vaccines cannot alter your DNA or change your genes

COVID-19 vaccines do not alter your DNA or change your genes. Vaccines teach your body how to protect itself against COVID-19. They do not affect or interact with your DNA in any way.



You should get vaccinated even though you can still catch or spread COVID-19

COVID-19 can make you very sick at any age. Older people and people with existing health conditions are more at risk. Two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine gives you around 90% protection against needing to go to hospital or dying from COVID-19. It also helps reduce spread of the virus to others.

Some people with COVID-19 need care in a hospital, and for some, intensive care is needed. If lots of people need hospital care at the same time it could put a lot of pressure on hospitals and the health system. Vaccination helps to reduce the number of people who need hospital care.

The risk of a serious side effect doesn't mean I shouldn't get vaccinated

All the COVID-19 vaccines that are approved in Australia have good safety information. Millions of doses of the vaccine have already been given safely, protecting people around the world from COVID-19.

All medicines have possible side effects, but the chance of a bad side effect from a COVID-19 vaccine is very low. Compared to the chance of getting COVID-19, the benefits of the vaccines are clear.

It is recommended that people 12 years and over get any COVID-19 vaccine available to them as soon as possible. The COVID-19 Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are approved for those aged 12-17 years old, and all three vaccines are approved for people aged 18+. You will be offered a vaccine that is recommended for your age and other eligibility criteria.

Protecting children under 12 years of age

There currently isn't a COVID-19 vaccine available for children under 12 years in Australia, although trials for younger children are underway.

In the meantime, the best way to protect a child under 12 years of age from getting COVID-19 is to make sure that everyone else in the family (who is eligible) is vaccinated.

You can still get a COVID-19 vaccine if you are pregnant, breastfeeding or trying to get pregnant

You can get vaccinated if you're pregnant, breastfeeding or trying for a baby. There is no scientific evidence that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility. If you are pregnant, you should get vaccinated now.

Pregnant women are more at risk from COVID-19. Vaccination reduces the chance of really bad illness and helps to keep you and your unborn baby protected. The vaccine cannot give you or your baby COVID-19.

By getting vaccinated you also protect your baby as there is evidence the antibodies can be passed on to your baby in cord blood and breastmilk.



After your COVID-19 vaccine

It takes one to two weeks after your second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to be fully protected, so it is important to continue to practice other protective measures to reduce your risk of catching and spreading the virus.

These measures include:

- Wearing a mask at all times when outside your house
- Keeping your distance from people you don't share a household with
- Practicing good hygiene such as frequently washing hands and/or using hand sanitiser.

You must continue to follow all of the rules even once you are fully protected against COVID-19.

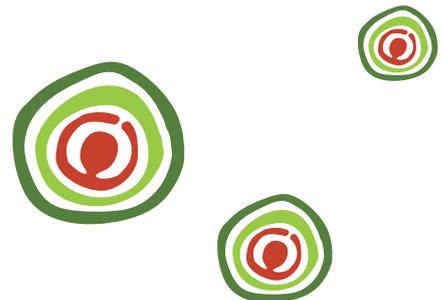
Booster shots

Research is underway to better understand how long the vaccines will provide protection against COVID-19, as well as how well they protect against new variants of the virus. This evidence will help to decide if a booster (or third dose) will be needed to maintain the best possible protection against COVID-19.

For more information:

If you have any concerns about the vaccine talk to your GP, Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Health Worker about what is best to help protect you. They can provide information about the COVID-19 vaccines and what to expect.

Vaccines are available at more than 3,000 places across NSW including Aboriginal Medical Services, pharmacies, GPs and NSW Health clinics.



To book visit: nsw.gov.au
or call the Vaccine Helpline on **1800 020 080** for assistance.

Get vaccinated to keep our mob safe