

COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet for School Immunization (must be 5 years of age or older at time of immunization)

Read this information carefully. If you have any questions, you may contact your health care provider.

What is COVID-19?

- The virus that causes COVID-19 is passed from an infected person to others when the person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks or breathes. Infected people can spread the infection even if they **do not** have symptoms.
- [Symptoms](#) can include cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, tiredness, and loss of smell or taste.

How does the COVID-19 vaccine protect against COVID-19 infection?

- The vaccine helps the body produce **antibodies** to prevent you from becoming sick if you are exposed to the COVID-19 virus.
- **Two** doses of the Pfizer Comirnaty mRNA COVID-19 vaccine can be 91% effective at protecting against illness. It is important to receive both doses of the vaccine to ensure optimal protection
- Children who are moderately to severely immunocompromised should receive three doses of COVID-19 vaccine to complete the primary series. Check eligibility and recommendations on the [Get the Shot](#) page.
- Individuals aged 12 to 17 years may be eligible for a booster dose, check eligibility and recommendations on the [Get the Shot](#) page.
- The vaccine does not contain the virus so **you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine.**

Who can and cannot receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

- You should not be vaccinated if you are **feeling unwell**, or had a serious **allergic reaction to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine**, or you are **allergic to polyethylene glycol (PEG) or Tromethamine**.
- If you are under 12 years old and have had a vaccine in the last 14 days, you must wait 14 days before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

**If your child is immunocompromised or has an autoimmune disorder you can discuss vaccination with their health care provider or review the COVID-19 vaccine information page at www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine

Tell the health care provider if the person receiving the vaccine:

- Has fainted or felt faint after receiving past vaccines or medical procedures.
- Has a bleeding disorder or is taking medication that could affect blood clotting.
- **For children under 12 years of age:** have received any other vaccines in the last 14 days.

What are the side effects of the vaccine?

Side effects are expected and can indicate the vaccine is working to protect you from COVID-19 infection. Side effects can develop in the days following the vaccination and can include one or more of the following:

- Pain, tenderness, and swelling where the needle was given (upper arm usually)
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain or Joint pain
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Chills or Fever
- Enlarged lymph nodes (swollen glands)
- Dizziness, decreased appetite, excessive sweating, itchy skin or rash
- Rarely Bell's Palsy (weakened or inability to move muscles of the face) has been reported after mRNA vaccines.

Myocarditis and Pericarditis

- There have been very rare reports of myocarditis and/or pericarditis following immunization with an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine product.
- Myocarditis is inflammation of the heart muscle and pericarditis is inflammation of the lining around the heart.
- Myocarditis and pericarditis has been reported more frequently in males, those under 30 years of age, and after a second dose.
- The majority of cases have been mild and individuals have recovered quickly.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you develop symptoms, which may include chest pain, shortness of breath, or the feeling of a fast, pounding or fluttering heartbeat.
- These symptoms typically occur within a week after the receipt of an mRNA vaccine dose.

Individuals with a history compatible with pericarditis who did not have any cardiac workup or had normal cardiac investigations can be revaccinated once:

- The individual is symptom-free and;
- At least 90 days has passed since vaccination

If another dose of COVID-19 vaccine is offered, the individual should receive the Pfizer/BioNTech 30mcg product due to the lower reported rate of myocarditis and/or pericarditis.

Informed consent should include discussion about the unknown risk of recurrence of myocarditis and/or pericarditis following receipt of additional doses of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in individuals with a history of confirmed myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a previous dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, as well as the need to seek immediate medical assessment and care should symptoms develop.

Allergic reactions are rare but can happen after receiving a vaccine. The health care providers at your school are prepared to manage an allergic reaction should it occur. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:

- Hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
- Swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing