COVID-19

What you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccine
What’s COVID-19?

COVID-19 is like a flu or cold virus and spreads when someone who has it coughs, sneezes or talks to another person. The virus spreads easily and quickly!
Scientists have been working hard to make a vaccine that will help protect us.

They have made a COVID-19 vaccine that is available now and everyone around the world is getting it.
This means that I could be getting the COVID-19 vaccine very soon.

- It is important that I get the COVID-19 vaccine to protect myself from getting sick.
- Doctors and scientists think less people will get sick from Covid-19 if more people have the vaccine.
The COVID19 vaccine is like other vaccines I may have gotten before, like the flu shot or a tetanus shot.

My body will create fighters to fight COVID-19 virus if I get infected.
Should I get the vaccine?

- The vaccine is for anyone who could get the virus. This includes people who had the virus before and for people who have not had the virus.

- Most people should get the vaccine, but some people should not, like:
  - People under the age of 16
  - Those who had an allergic reaction to polyethylene glycol or polysorbate that can be found in skin cream or makeup.
  - People who have current Covid-19 symptoms.
What if I’m not sure?

∙ If I am unsure if I should get the vaccine, I can talk to my doctor.
∙ A caregiver or staff member can help me to do this.
What I need to know if I get the vaccine?

- Safety
- Side Effects
- Allergies
- Medication
- Who is paying for it
- Who will get it first
Safety

- Doctors and scientists have done lots of work to make sure it is safe to use. Before I get the vaccine, I will be asked questions to make sure that it is safe for me.
- Few people have serious side effects or allergic reactions.
Side Effects

- Some common side effects like other vaccines are as follows:
  - Pain at injection site
  - Headache
  - Feeling tired
  - Muscle or joint pain
  - Fever or chills

- If you feel any of these side effects in the 3 days after the vaccine, call 911 or tell your caregiver or staff and they will help you.
Allergies

- Very few people are allergic to vaccines.

- The doctors and nurses will watch me closely after giving me the vaccine. They are there to keep me safe.

- If I have concerns about an allergic reaction to the vaccine, I can talk to my doctor. My caregiver or staff will help look for signs of side effects and allergies.
Medication

- Most people who take different medications will not have to worry about how their medications mix with the vaccine.

- If I have any concerns about my medication and the vaccine, I can talk to my doctor.
Who is paying for the vaccine?

- The Government of Canada is paying for everyone’s vaccine.
- This means that the vaccine is free for me.
Who will get the vaccine first?

- Some people will get the vaccine before others.

- People who are at greater risk from becoming very sick from Covid19 will get it first.

- I know my turn will come to get the vaccine very soon.
What I need to know when I get the vaccine

- Safety at the appointment
- How to prepare
- What will happen
- What to expect after my vaccine
- How many times do I need to get the vaccine?
Safety at the appointment

- Everyone is being very careful to make sure no one gets COVID-19 when they get their vaccine. Strict safety rules will be in place.

- This means when I go for my vaccine, I will need to wear a mask, wash my hands and stay 6 feet away from people in the clinic.
How to prepare for my appointment

- Have on a short sleeve t-shirt or sleeves that are easy to roll up
- Pack my health card and immunization card and if I need it, an item that makes me feel happy or calm (e.g., iPad to play videos or a stress ball to squeeze)
- Wash my hands
- Put on my winter clothes and mask
How to prepare for my appointment

If I am stressed or nervous about my appointment, I can do activities that keep me calm, like:

- Deep breathing
- Listening to music
- Going for a walk,
What will happen when I get the vaccine?

The doctor/nurse/pharmacist will apply an alcohol swab on my upper arm to clean the area.

I will sit still. The needle is put in my upper arm, this will pinch.

Once I get the needle, I will wait for 15 minutes in the waiting area. After 15 minutes, I can go home.
What to expect after my vaccine

- When I go home, I can carry on doing my regular routine.

- I might have sore muscles, a red spot where the needle went in, or a low fever after I get the vaccine. This is okay and normal! I can use an ice pack to make it feel better.

- If I don’t feel well or am worried, I can call the doctor or nurse. They are here to help.

- If I am very unwell, I should call 911.
How many times do I need to get the vaccine?

- I will need to get the vaccine **2 times**. This means after I get my first vaccine, I will need to get my second vaccine shortly after.
How many times do I need to get the vaccine?

It is very important that I get my second vaccine to make sure it works.
What will life be like after I get the vaccine?

- Even though the COVID-19 vaccine is here and many people will be getting vaccinated, life will not go back to normal right away.

- It is going to take a long time for everyone to get vaccinated. This means COVID-19 rules will be around for a while.
I will need to follow the COVID rules, even after I am vaccinated

To keep safe, I will continue to do things that I have been doing so well, such as physical distancing.

This means keeping 2 metres/6 feet distance from others OR the length of 1 pool noodle apart.
I will need to wear a mask that covers my mouth and nose. This is especially important when it is difficult to physical distance from others, such as going to a medical appointment or in my home.
I will need to wash my hands often using soap and water.

If soap and water are not available, I will need to use hand sanitizer.
I should wash my hands when:

✓ I come in from outside.

✓ After I have touched a surface or item from outside.

✓ Before I touch my face.

✓ Before I eat.
I should stay at home as much as possible

- The only times I should be leaving home is for medical appointments, essential things, like food and medication, or to work.

- This means I can connect with my family and friends through phone, video or email.