

## VACCINATION — FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What are the side effects of the vaccine?**

The most common side effects people reported are soreness at the injection site, fever, fatigue and muscle aches. These typically resolve after about 48 hours, are signs your body is learning to fight COVID-19, and can be treated with ibuprofen or Tylenol.

### **What are the risks of a serious allergic reaction to the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine?**

The risk of a serious allergic reaction is very low, but YKHC health providers will monitor individuals for 20 minutes following vaccination, to ensure timely care is provided under the extremely rare circumstance of an allergic reaction.

### **What is the effectiveness of the vaccine?**

Early research suggests both COVID-19 vaccines developed by Pfizer and Moderna, currently being used in the YK Delta, are over 94% effective in preventing COVID-19 infection.

### **Will I still have to wear a mask when I am fully vaccinated?**

Yes. Masks and avoiding close contact with others are simple and effective tools to prevent the spread of this highly contagious virus. Experts need more information about the protection of the vaccines, many more people need to be vaccinated, and understanding how the virus spreads in communities amidst these conditions would be needed in order to reconsider recommendations about masks.

### **Will I have to quarantine after I am fully vaccinated?**

People who are fully vaccinated (two weeks after their second dose) and do not have any symptoms, do not need to quarantine after travel or exposure to someone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. These individuals should still be tested in accordance with YKHC guidelines.

### **Can people still spread COVID-19 after they have been vaccinated?**

We are not sure whether you can still spread COVID-19 after vaccination, so it is important to comply with all

of the public health measures that we know work to decrease the spread of COVID-19: wear a mask, remain physically distant from anyone who does not reside in your household, and wash your hands frequently.

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

No, because there are no viral parts in the vaccine. mRNA vaccines do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19. The vaccine only contains instructions on how to recognize the virus and attack it.

### **Have there been many studies done on these vaccines?**

Yes. The FDA requires rigorous testing and safety information for each vaccine. These were tested on tens of thousands of people.

### **How was the vaccine created and distributed so quickly (in less than one year)?**

Scientists have been studying mRNA vaccine development, the same technology used for the COVID-19 vaccines, for over a decade – following other similar respiratory viral outbreaks. Additionally, the federal government invested resources that allowed the scientific community to proceed with traditional vaccine research and development steps happening at the same time, while ensuring no safety steps were eliminated. For example, pharmaceutical companies began manufacturing vaccines at industrial scale, while work to demonstrate efficacy and safety continued. This removed financial risk to the medical community without sacrificing vaccine safety.

Resource: <https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/explaining-operation-warp-speed/index.html>

### **Is it safe to get the vaccine?**

Yes. The companies making the leading vaccines have taken the unusual step of releasing their study for public review to ensure transparency. For both Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, thousands of participants have passed the two-month window and neither vaccine has prompted serious or concerning adverse effects.

*FAQ continues...*

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### **Should I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?**

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have recommended that pregnant and breastfeeding mothers be given the vaccine if desired. There have been no reported adverse effects in pregnancies in women after they received the vaccine.

### **Should I get vaccinated if I already had COVID-19?**

Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That's because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19.

### **Can children get the vaccine?**

The Emergency Use Authorization only recommended use for ages 16 and higher.

### **Where can I learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine?**

YKHC recommends using trusted sources of information to gather more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and State of Alaska.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/epi/id/pages/COVID-19/vaccine.aspx>