

Planning for your COVID-19 vaccine

Information for people who are pregnant with significant heart disease

November 23, 2022

Why is planning for a COVID-19 vaccine important?

- If you are pregnant and have significant heart disease, you can talk to your health care provider about the benefits and risks of vaccination while pregnant.
- It is important that you monitor how you are feeling in the days leading up to your vaccine appointment. If you are feeling unwell (relative to how you are usually feeling in your pregnancy), rebook for when you are feeling better.

Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine? Will the vaccine work for me?

- All of the COVID-19 vaccines available in Canada are safe. Vaccines teach your body to develop antibodies against the COVID-19 virus. These antibodies will help fight off future infections and protect from serious illness.
- Doctors and researchers have looked at the evidence. They agree that, unless you have a **very** serious allergy to any of the vaccine ingredients, you should strongly consider getting the COVID-19 vaccine. This is because you have a higher chance of experiencing severe symptoms if you get COVID-19. If you were to get COVID-19, you may also experience cardiovascular complications, especially if your heart disease is significant.
- Experts also agree that getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a reasonable choice for people who are pregnant, as they are safe and can help protect you and your baby. Pregnant people are routinely and safely immunized with COVID-19 and other types of vaccines all around the world.
- Although people who were pregnant weren't specifically included in the clinical trials of the COVID-19 vaccine, a small handful of people became pregnant during the vaccine trials. Some were in early pregnancy before they received their vaccine dose, and others became pregnant after receiving their vaccine dose. We have strong safety data for the COVID-19 vaccine for pregnant people.
- You can find more guidance on deciding whether or not to get a COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant on the [BCCDC website](#).

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What if I test positive for COVID-19?

- If you've recently had a positive COVID-19 test result, you can wait up to 3 months for a booster dose. The likelihood of a COVID-19 reinfection during this period of time is small because having COVID-19 boosts your immunity.
- You can also choose to get a booster dose at any time after your symptoms have passed. It is not harmful to get vaccinated and it will give you a good boost to your protection.

What about the medications or treatments that I take?

- Most medications are safe to take on the same day as your vaccine. If you take medications for your heart disease or another condition and you aren't sure if you need to consider timing, you can also look at the [COVID-19 vaccine planning considerations](#) posted on the BCCDC website for that condition (if available), and/or call 8-1-1 or talk to your health-care provider.

How else should I plan for my vaccine appointment?

- Review HealthLink BC's general information on [COVID-19 vaccines](#).
- It is important that you are feeling as well as possible when you get your vaccine. However, some people who are pregnant feel unwell due to their pregnancy, and many experience nausea, vomiting, and shortness of breath. You may also be experiencing symptoms of your heart disease.
- In the 2-3 days leading up to your vaccine monitor yourself: are any of your symptoms new or worsening? If you aren't feeling well, rebook your vaccine appointment for another day. You won't lose your place in line. Consider reaching out to your health care provider about your worsening symptoms.
- It is safe to get a vaccine at any stage of your pregnancy. Some people may choose to avoid getting vaccines during the first trimester, but this is a personal preference and it is up to you.
- You can feel safe going to the COVID-19 vaccine clinic, as they are following all COVID-19 safety precautions.

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What or who should I bring with me?

- Please bring your BC Services Card or CareCard to your appointment.
- You can bring any medical or mobility equipment that you need.
- If you need to, you can bring a trusted friend, family member or caregiver with you to support you through the process and/or translate for you as needed. Please only bring one person.

What happens after my vaccine?

- Everyone who gets a COVID-19 vaccine will stay on location to be monitored for 15 minutes after they get their vaccine.
- You should tell a health-care provider at the vaccination site if you do not feel well.
- If you have any new or worsening symptoms once you go home, please call your health care team or 8-1-1. If you have a severe allergic reaction, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- You can learn more about what to expect after your vaccine [on the BCCDC website](#).

My vaccine planning checklist

- Read the COVID-19 vaccine information for my condition(s)
- Time my vaccine appointment around my medication and treatments (if relevant to me)
- Talk to my doctor if I have any questions or need any help planning my medication
- Monitor how I'm feeling leading up to my vaccination appointment. Is anything new or getting worse compared to how I usually feel?
- Plan to bring the medical and mobility equipment I need with me