

Planning for your COVID-19 vaccine

Information for people with cystic fibrosis

November 23, 2022

Why is planning for a COVID-19 vaccine important?

- It is very important that you monitor how you are feeling in the days leading up to your vaccine appointment. If you do not feel well, rebook for when you are feeling better.

Should I get the 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. People with cystic fibrosis and lung disease have a higher chance of experiencing severe symptoms from COVID-19.
- People with cystic fibrosis were not included in the clinical trials of the COVID-19 vaccines. However, experts agree that there is no reason from a disease perspective why the COVID-19 vaccine would work any differently for most people who have cystic fibrosis. The way the vaccines work means that there is a strong chance that your immune system will learn to protect you from COVID-19.

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 my other medications or treatments?

- If you are taking antibiotics for a cystic fibrosis flare up in your lungs, you should wait to book your vaccine until you have finished the antibiotics, and call your cystic fibrosis clinic to confirm.

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- If you have had a transplant, please read the information for people who have had a transplant on the [BCCDC website](#).
- If you take medications for another condition and you aren't sure if you need to worry about 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, most people with cystic fibrosis have chronic symptoms, like coughing, sputum production, and shortness of breath.
- Monitor yourself for 4-5 days before your vaccine appointment: are any of your symptoms new or getting worse? If you are not feeling like your usual self, rebook your vaccine appointment for another day. You won't lose your place in line. Please contact your health care provider about any new or worsening symptoms.
- If you are having any other more serious cystic fibrosis-related problems, like a bowel obstruction or pancreatitis, you need to call your cystic fibrosis health care provider. You may have to wait until you are considered stable before you get vaccinated for COVID-19.

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](#).

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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