





COVID-19 VACCINATION INFO SHEET


The COVID-19 vaccine is becoming available in communities across Canada. Please consult your local public health website regarding specifics and timelines for your area.


The Crohn's and Colitis Canada COVID-19 & IBD Task Force recommends that people living with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) receive a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to them. While there is no research regarding the safety or effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine in people with IBD, the Task Force believes that they are safe and should be offered to people with IBD.


	As always, discuss risks and benefits with your healthcare provider to make an informed decision based on your personal circumstances
	It is recommended that you book a vaccination when available
	If you are eligible for prioritized vaccine access, you should not be deprioritized because of an IBD diagnosis or immunosuppressive therapy


COMMON QUESTIONS


-  **What are the vaccines for COVID-19?**
Currently, Health Canada has approved four vaccines:
 - Pfizer/BioNTech mRNA vaccine
 - Moderna mRNA vaccine
 - University of Oxford/AstraZeneca non-replicating adenovirus vector vaccine
 - Johnson & Johnson's non-replicating adenovirus vector vaccine


-  **What is known about the use of COVID-19 vaccines in people with IBD?**
 - People with immune-mediated conditions, autoimmune diseases, and those on immunosuppressive therapy were not included in the existing vaccine clinical trials. Data on safety and effectiveness in this population will be coming soon.

-  **Which vaccine is recommended?**
 - You should get the vaccine that is first available to you. Your doctor can discuss the benefits of each vaccine, but all vaccines are highly protective against severe COVID-19.

-  **When should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?**
 - At the first available opportunity as determined by the rules in each province.
 - There is no research to support "timing" the vaccine at a certain point in the cycle of biologic medication infusions/injections.
 - People with IBD who are taking steroids should discuss with their doctor when to get the vaccine.

-  **Can vaccines trigger an IBD flare?**
 - There is no evidence that vaccines cause an IBD flare-up. While there is no research of the COVID-19 vaccines in people with IBD, the risk is likely low.
 - Do not stop your IBD medications unless instructed to do so by your doctor. Pausing immunosuppressing medication (for example, while recovering from infection), may cause a flare of your IBD.

-  **What side effects are expected?**
 - Common side effects are pain, redness, or swelling where the needle was given, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, and fever. You may also experience nausea, diarrhea, or swollen glands in your underarm.

-  **After I receive the vaccine, do I still need to practice social distancing and wear a mask?**
 - Yes, everyone who is vaccinated will still need to follow the public health measures in place at that time such as physical distancing, mask wearing, and washing hands.



Scan QR code for additional information and letter

Crohn's and Colitis Canada's Task Force has developed a letter that people with IBD can provide to pharmacies and other COVID-19 distribution sites. The letter can be signed by your primary healthcare provider or IBD specialist.

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These recommendations apply only to the currently available mRNA and non-replicating adenovirus vector vaccines, and not necessarily for vaccines approved in the future. These recommendations are subject to change as new data and information are generated. As new scientific evidence becomes available, these recommendations may be revised by Crohn's and Colitis Canada.

