

# Viral vector-based COVID-19 Vaccine

Vaccination,  
the best protection

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Vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19 and its complications, in addition to other measures such as physical distancing, wearing a medical mask or face covering, and hand washing.

Disease	Signs and symptoms	Possible complications
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fever</li><li>• Cough</li><li>• Trouble breathing</li><li>• Loss of smell</li><li>• Fatigue</li><li>• Headaches</li><li>• Muscle aches</li><li>• Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea</li><li>• Overall sick feeling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pneumonia and other respiratory issues</li><li>• Heart problems</li><li>• Neurological problems</li><li>• Death</li></ul>

## The vaccine

Vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19 and its complications. Viral vector-based COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for people age 55 and over.

Viral vector-based COVID-19 vaccines require two doses. Shots are administered by intramuscular injection. After the first dose, viral vector-based vaccine is about 60% effective in preventing the disease and 90% effective in preventing hospitalization. The second dose is mainly for long-term protection. Given the current very high spread of COVID-19, administration of the second dose can be postponed to allow more people to be vaccinated. The effectiveness in preventing the disease is more than 80% after two doses.

For people who have had COVID-19 before the first dose of vaccine, a single dose is required. Although there is no risk of giving two doses of vaccine to someone who has had COVID-19, the frequency of adverse reactions is higher. In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose does not provide any additional protection for these people. For people with a weakened immune system or who had COVID-19 when they were given the 1<sup>st</sup> dose or in the days after they were vaccinated, two doses are required.

## Symptoms after vaccination

Some symptoms may be caused by the vaccine (e.g., pain at the injection site). Other problem may occur by chance and are not related to the vaccine (e.g., cold, gastro). Most reactions are harmless and do not last long. These reactions occur slightly more often with the first dose.

This vaccine cannot cause COVID-19 because they do not contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes the disease. However, people who have been in contact with the virus in the days preceding or following their vaccination could still develop COVID-19. It is important to continue to apply health measures until a majority of the population has been vaccinated.

## Safety of the vaccine

Viral vector-based COVID-19 vaccine is approved by Health Canada. It has met all the requirements for approval. The vaccine was tested on a large number of people. Experts are closely monitoring any adverse reactions that could occur following vaccination and taking measures to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine.

Recently, very rare cases of serious blood clots with drop in the number of blood cells that help clotting following vaccination with Astrazeneca vaccine or Covishield have been reported in other countries. Cases identified so far have been primarily in women under the age of 55 years. A link with the vaccine is plausible. The situation is being closely monitored and vaccination of people under 55 years of age is suspended until further notice.

(see verso)

# Viral vector-based COVID-19 Vaccine *(continued)*

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Frequency	Known reactions to this vaccine	What to do
In most cases (more than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain or tenderness at the injection site</li> <li>• Headache, fatigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply a cold, damp compress at the injection site.</li> <li>• Use medication for fever or discomfort if needed.</li> <li>• See a doctor if symptoms are severe, especially if the following symptoms appear within a few days of vaccination:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or stomach pain;</li> <li>- severe headache or headache that has lasted for a few days, blurred vision or bruises on the skin.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Very often (less than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Itching, swelling, warmth, redness or bruising at the injection site</li> <li>• Shivering, discomfort, nausea</li> <li>• Muscle soreness</li> <li>• Joint pain</li> </ul>	
Often (less than 10% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Diarrhea (Covishield vaccine only)</li> </ul>	
Very rarely (1 to 9 persons in 100,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood clots with drop in the number of blood cells that help clotting within 4 to 20 days following vaccination</li> </ul>	

If you have COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, trouble breathing, loss of smell, etc.), consult the *COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool* to find out if you need to be tested:

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/covid-19-symptom-self-assessment-tool/>

We recommend that you stay at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after vaccination because allergic reactions may occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, the symptoms will appear a few minutes after the vaccination. The person giving the vaccine will be able to treat this reaction immediately.

**For any questions, contact the person giving the vaccine, or Info-Santé 811 or your doctor.**