

# What you need to know about Myocarditis and Pericarditis

COVID-19 mRNA vaccines are safe and effective, and are recommended for all Ontario residents 5 years of age and older to prevent severe illness and hospitalization. A small number of cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining around the heart) have been reported following COVID-19 vaccination in Canada and Internationally. The majority of reported cases have been mild with individuals recovering quickly, normally with anti-inflammatory medication.

## **The Provincial government recommends the use of Pfizer vaccine for people under the age of 25.**

This recommendation is based on current available evidence from the Ontario adverse events following immunization (AEFI) surveillance system. The evidence indicates that while rare, fewer cases of myocarditis and pericarditis have been reported after vaccination with the Pfizer vaccine compared to Moderna vaccine in this age group.

Individuals who received Moderna for their first dose can safely take the Pfizer vaccine for their second dose. Mixing vaccines is safe and effective, and full vaccination with two doses of the mRNA vaccine offers the greatest protection you can have against COVID-19 and the Delta variant. If you received Moderna as your first dose, you can choose to receive Moderna as your second dose after consultation with immunization staff and making an informed choice.



## What you need to know:

- Cases of myocarditis and pericarditis are reported more often following a second dose of vaccine compared to following a first dose.
- Cases occurred more often in males aged 18-24.
- Most cases are mild, with symptoms starting within a week after vaccination.
- Common symptoms of myocarditis and pericarditis are chest pain, shortness of breath and feelings of a fast beating, fluttering or pounding heart. Seek medical care if you have any of these symptoms.
- Most people respond well to treatment and recover fully.
- All countries who are using mRNA vaccines in young adults and adolescents continue to recommend their use, including Canada, because the benefits of vaccination outweigh the potential risks.
- There are many potential causes of myocarditis and pericarditis -including viral infections. They can occur as a result of COVID-19 infection.



## Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes! Evidence continues to show that the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination far outweigh any potential risks. Becoming fully vaccinated can take us one step closer to resuming many of the activities we enjoyed prior to the pandemic.

