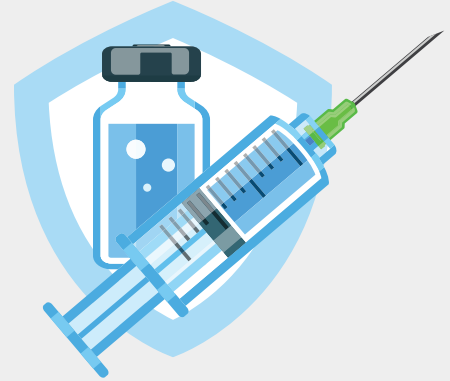# The best COVID-19 vaccine is the one you are offered first

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective

Health Canada has approved four COVID-19 vaccines: Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Janssen. Health Canada has approved these vaccines because evidence shows that they are safe, effective, and of high quality. The vaccines protect you and help build immunity across our community.
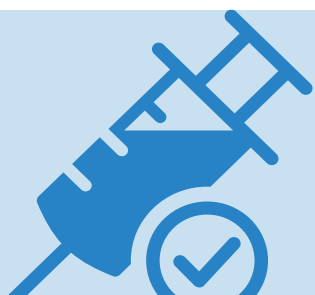
Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines

- Use messenger RNA, or mRNA technology.
- mRNA technology has been used in research trials for years.
- mRNA in the vaccine tells the body's cells to make "spike proteins," similar to what is found on the COVID-19 virus.
- The immune system responds to the spike proteins by making antibodies.
- Antibodies break down the spike proteins, get rid of them, and protect you against COVID-19 infection.

AstraZeneca and Janssen COVID-19 Vaccines

- Use viral vector technology.
- Viral vector technology has been used for several years to produce vaccines, including an Ebola vaccine.
- The vaccines uses a harmless vector virus as a delivery system. The vector virus stores instructions for your immune system to create a spike protein found on the surface of the COVID-19 virus.
- Antibodies break down the harmless virus, read the instructions, and learn how to make new antibodies for the COVID-19 spike proteins.

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain live virus. **You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine**.

All of the COVID-19 vaccines approved in Canada are highly effective in preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccine side effects

COVID-19 vaccines can cause side effects, although not everyone experiences them. The most commonly reported side effects include:

- pain, redness or swelling at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache

- muscle and joint pain
- chills
- mild fever

These side effects are normal signs that your body is building protection. Serious side effects after receiving the vaccine are rare.

The best shot is the first shot

- Get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible, with whatever approved vaccine is offered.
- The vaccine offered first will be the one that will protect you and our community the best.

Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and vaccine safety by visiting **halton.ca/COVIDvaccines**.

HALTON REGION