

18pt

**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# COVID-19 vaccination

Adapted in 2024 by Accessible Formats Service,  
Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland

**TN:** The logos on the top of the page are Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand, Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa | New Zealand Government.

# **COVID-19 vaccination**

Everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand aged 5 and over can get a free COVID-19 vaccine.

## **Who can get a COVID-19 vaccine**

Everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand aged 5 or over can get a free COVID-19 vaccination. It does not matter what your visa or citizenship status is.

Children aged 6 months to 4 years can get the infant Pfizer vaccine if they are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

## **Which vaccine you will get**

Pfizer is the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for use in Aotearoa New Zealand. We use the Pfizer XBB1.5 monovalent vaccine. This is an updated vaccine produces an immune response against the Omicron subvariant, XBB.1.5.

Pharmac has previously funded a Novavax vaccine for COVID-19. However, in July 2024 Novavax withdrew its application for approval of its latest vaccine. The Novavax vaccine is therefore currently unavailable in Aotearoa New Zealand.

# Side effects

Like most medicines, you might experience some mild side effects in the days after getting your vaccine. This is common, and a sign that your body is learning to fight the virus.

Most side effects do not last long and will not stop you from having an additional doses or going about your daily life.

The most common reported reactions are:

- pain or swelling at the injection site
- feeling tired or fatigued
- headache
- muscle aches
- chills
- dizziness
- swollen lymph nodes
- joint pain
- fever
- redness at the injection site
- nausea.

If you have chest discomfort, contact a healthcare provider in case it is a sign of something more serious.

Some side effects are more serious but rare, such as a severe allergic reaction.

Serious allergic reactions or anaphylaxis from the vaccine are rare. This is why people are watched for around 15 minutes post-vaccination. Vaccinators are well trained in managing these if they occur.

More (non-translated) information on [COVID-19 side effects and reactions](#).

## **Additional doses**

Having COVID-19 does not provide the same level of immunity as getting vaccinated. We also know that your protection from the vaccine decreases over time.

To keep your immunity levels high, stay up to date with your immunisations – including additional doses. This will lower your chances of getting very sick from COVID-19 and ending up in hospital.

### **If you are 30 years of age and over**

If you are 30 years of age and over, you can have additional doses regardless of the number of COVID-19 vaccines you have already had.

You can have an additional dose if you have had your initial COVID-19 vaccinations (your primary course).

It is recommended:

- you wait at least 6 months since you had COVID-19, and;
- at least 6 months since you had any other COVID-19 vaccine.

## **If you are 16 to 29 years of age**

Healthy people aged 16 to 29 can have 1 additional dose.

To get an additional dose:

- you must have had at least your initial COVID-19 vaccinations (primary course), and;
- it is recommended you wait at least 6 months since your last COVID-19 vaccine or infection.

Some people aged 16 to 29 can have additional doses.

This includes:

- severely immunocompromised people
- pregnant people
- those who have a medical condition that increases the risk of severe illness from COVID-19
- those who live with disability with significant or complex health needs or multiple comorbidities.

## **If you are 12 to 15 years old**

Healthy rangatahi (young people) aged 12 to 15 are not eligible for additional doses.

Rangatahi aged 12 to 15 who have a medical condition that increases the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 can get additional doses. Talk to your doctor, nurse, or healthcare provider about whether this is recommended.

## **Children under 12 years old**

Healthy tamariki (children) under the age of 12 cannot get additional doses. Children have a good immune response and are much less likely to have a severe illness and need to go to hospital if they get COVID-19.

At risk and immunocompromised tamariki are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine and may need more than 1 dose of the vaccine to be protected from serious illness. You can talk to your doctor, nurse or healthcare provider about your child's specific circumstances.

## **How to book a vaccination**

### **Book over the phone**

Book or ask questions over the phone from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Interpreters are available and you can choose to speak with a Māori advisor, a disability advisor, or use NZ Relay.

Call: 0800 28 29 26

## **Book online**

It is free, fast and easy to book or change your appointments using the website [Book a vaccine \(info.health.nz\)](https://info.health.nz).

Before you book, check the appointment availability map. It can show you where vaccination sites are, how soon you can get an appointment, and which vaccine types are available.

## **Book through your usual healthcare provider**

Call your usual doctor, nurse, or healthcare provider, if you have one, to make an immunisation appointment. Plan at least 1 to 2 weeks ahead so you can get a time and date that works best for you and your whānau.

## **Walk ins**

There are many places around New Zealand where you can get a COVID-19 vaccine without an appointment.

To find out where you can access vaccination providers, see [Healthpoint \(https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19-vaccination-and-boosters/\)](https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19-vaccination-and-boosters/)

(The information on the link above may not be available in alternate formats)

## **If you need support**

- The COVID-19 disability helpline can provide help or information about vaccines, face mask exemptions, testing, managing COVID-19, and any other health concerns you may have.

Call 0800 11 12 13 for free. If you are unable to call, you can text 8988.

- You can also call Healthline for free for advice on 0800 611 116.

**End of COVID-19 vaccination.**