

# Viral Vector COVID-19 Vaccines

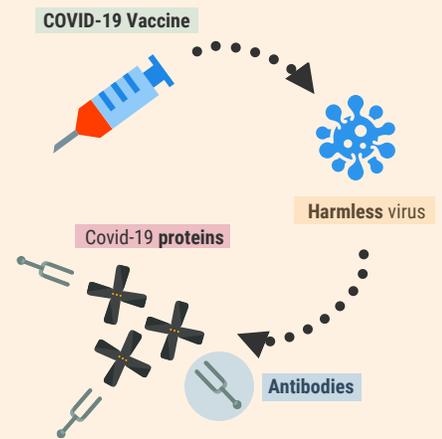
## Some Facts

There are two viral vector vaccines that have been approved in Canada to fight COVID-19: the **AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines**. This handout provides **accurate medical information** about these vaccines to help you make an **informed decision**. It has been reviewed by doctors and is up to date as of March 2021.



### How do viral vector vaccines work?

These vaccines use the help of a **harmless virus** called adenovirus. This virus has the instructions on how to make small parts of the COVID-19 virus known as proteins. After you get this vaccine, your cells will make these proteins. Your body sees these proteins as something that is not supposed to be there and makes antibodies to kill the proteins. These antibodies stay in your body, while the harmless virus does not. In the future, **if your body ever sees these COVID-19 proteins (as part of the COVID-19 virus), the antibodies will quickly attack these and kill the COVID-19 virus**. This is how the vaccine protects you.



These are not "live" vaccines. This means you **cannot** get an infection from them.

### AstraZeneca

- **2 doses** four months apart
- 79% effective at preventing COVID-19 disease
- **100% protection against severe COVID-19 disease (hospitalization, complications, death)**

### Johnson & Johnson

- **1 dose**
- 66% effective at preventing COVID-19 disease
- **85% protection against severe COVID-19 disease (hospitalization, complications, death)**



Johnson & Johnson is only **one** dose!



### Who should **NOT** get these vaccines?

Do **not** get these vaccines if:

- You are under the age of 18
- You are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19
- You had another vaccine in the last 14 days
- You are allergic to anything in the vaccine



Review of studies has shown that the AstraZeneca vaccine **does not** increase your chances of getting a blood clot.



It is still **strongly recommended** for people who have had blood clots before, those who have family members who have had blood clots, and those who are on blood thinners.

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## Some Facts



### What about special populations?

If you are pregnant, breast-feeding, immunocompromised, or have a bad allergy to another food, drug, or vaccine - you can likely still get the vaccine. **You should speak to your healthcare provider.**



Always speak to a **healthcare provider** if you are worried about anything you see or read about these vaccines.



### What are the side effects?

Some people get pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle or joint pain, fever, chills, nausea or vomiting. Very few people may get an allergic reaction. **Other side effects are rare.**



These side effects are **similar** to the side effects of other vaccines (like the flu vaccine).



### How do the different vaccines compare?

You may be offered one of the **4 approved vaccines** based on your age, vaccine availability, or if you have any allergies to specific ingredients in the vaccines.

	Pfizer	Moderna	AstraZeneca	Johnson & Johnson
Type of vaccine	mRNA	mRNA	Viral vector	Viral vector
Dosage	2 doses (four months apart)	2 doses (four months apart)	2 doses (four months apart)	1 dose
Number of people in trials	43,651	30,351	11,636	44,325
% people of colour/minorities in trials	17%	36%	17%	38%
Protection against COVID-19 disease 14 days after 1 dose	93%	92%	76%	66%
Protection against severe COVID-19 disease (hospitalization, complications, death) **	100% two weeks after second dose	100% two weeks after second dose	100% two weeks after second dose	85% four weeks after one dose



\*\* These are **important numbers** to look at: they show how well these vaccines protect you from getting very sick, ending up in the hospital, having complications, or dying.



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If you are unsure about what you read, check with your family doctor or nurse practitioner.

**You can also visit the following Public Health websites for more information:**

- <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines.html>

