

COVID-19 vaccine – protein-based

(age 12 years and older)

What are COVID-19 vaccines?

COVID-19 vaccines protect against the SARS-CoV-2 virus (also known as COVID-19). The virus causes an infection in the lungs and airways and is a type of respiratory illness. In some cases, the infection can cause problems with other organs or other parts of the body. Go to primarycare.alberta.ca/covid to learn more about COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines help protect you from getting very sick from COVID-19 and needing care in the hospital. The **Nuvaxovid XFG COVID-19** vaccine is a protein-based vaccine that is approved by Health Canada. It is an updated protein-based vaccine that helps protect you against the COVID-19 strains that are currently spreading.

Who can get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Albertans at high risk

Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine is available free of charge for:

- People age 65 years and older.
- People age 12 to 64 years who are at higher risk of severe illness or more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 and spread it to others.

Visit alberta.ca/respiratory-virus-season-get-vaccinated for details about COVID-19 vaccine eligibility.

All other Albertans

All other Albertans age 12 to 64 years who cannot get COVID-19 vaccine free of charge may be able to purchase it at a participating pharmacy.

Do I need a vaccine if I have already had COVID-19?

If you have already had COVID-19, it is not yet known how long your protection will last or how much protection you will have against variants. It is important to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you have already had the virus.

If you had COVID-19, you can get the vaccine once you are no longer sick and are feeling better. If you developed multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C or MIS-A) after having COVID-19, check with your healthcare provider about when to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

What if my child is getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

A parent or guardian must provide consent for a child under age 18 years to get a Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine. In some cases, children under age 18 years may be able to give their own consent.

How well do COVID-19 vaccines work?

How well COVID-19 vaccines work is different for each variant (also called strain) of the virus. As new COVID-19 variants are identified, vaccines are updated to offer better protection. COVID-19 vaccines help to lower your risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 and needing care in the hospital. The best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is to get immunized.

What vaccine can I or my child get?

If you are age 12 years or older, Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine may be an option if you cannot get an mRNA vaccine or you prefer a protein-based vaccine.

How many doses of Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine do I or my child need?

COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, including how many doses to get, depend on your age and your immune system. Talk to your healthcare provider about what is right for you.

Healthy immune system

If you are age 12 years or older and have not had any COVID-19 vaccines, you need 1 dose of Nuvaxovid XFG COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have already had 1 or more doses of a non-XFG COVID-19 vaccine, you can get 1 dose of the Nuvaxovid XFG COVID-19 vaccine at least 3 months after your last dose of any COVID-19 vaccine.

Weakened immune system

If you are age 12 years or older with a weakened immune system, you need 3 doses of COVID-19 vaccine. The Nuvaxovid XFG COVID-19 vaccine can start or complete your 3-dose series.

If you have already had 3 or more doses of a non-XFG COVID-19 vaccine, you can get 1 dose of the Nuvaxovid XFG COVID-19 vaccine at least 3 months after your last dose of any COVID-19 vaccine.

Off-label use

“Off-label use” means the vaccine is used differently than the way it was originally approved. Vaccine experts support the following off-label uses for Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccines and have no safety concerns:

- You get a dose of Nuvaxovid less than 6 months from a previous dose.
- You get 3 doses of Nuvaxovid.
- You have already had 1 dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and get 2 doses of Nuvaxovid.
- You have not had any COVID-19 vaccines and get 1 dose of Nuvaxovid and do not get a second dose.

Can I get Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding/chestfeeding?

While you are pregnant, you have a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine lowers your risk of getting seriously ill from the virus.

Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine may be an option if you cannot get an mRNA vaccine or you prefer a protein-based vaccine.

However, there is more safety information about mRNA COVID-19 vaccines during pregnancy than about Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine.

You can get Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine if you are breastfeeding/chestfeeding.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding/chestfeeding and have questions about getting any COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your healthcare provider.

Where can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Go to primarycare.alberta.ca/covidvaccine to find out where and when you can get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Are there side effects from Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccines?

There can be side effects from Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- Redness where you had the needle that may look red on lighter skin or purple on darker skin
- swelling or feeling sore where you had the needle
- pain or discomfort in your arm, hand, leg, or foot
- feeling tired or having a headache
- a fever
- body aches or sore joints
- feeling sick to your stomach (nausea) or vomiting (throwing up)

At least 1 out of 100 people who got this vaccine reported 1 or more of these side effects. In some cases, it is unknown if the vaccine caused these side effects.

➞ See reverse for more information

Current information shows that there is similar risk of side effects after each dose of a protein-based COVID-19 vaccine.

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

What rare events have been reported after getting Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine?

There have been very rare reports of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining around the heart) after getting the Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine.

Myocarditis and pericarditis can cause shortness of breath, chest pain, or a very fast or abnormal heart rate. Get medical help **right away** if you have any of these symptoms.

Research is still happening to learn more about the risk of myocarditis and pericarditis and the Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine.

Talk to your healthcare provider before you get a dose of COVID-19 vaccine if:

- You had myocarditis or pericarditis within 6 weeks of getting a COVID-19 vaccine.
- You have a history of myocarditis or pericarditis and you have questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

Your risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 is much higher than your risk of having a rare event after these vaccines.

How can I manage side effects if they happen?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with a fever or pain. Check with your healthcare provider if you are not sure what medicine or dose to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weakened immune system, must call their healthcare provider if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your healthcare provider even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

What if I had or I am getting another type of vaccine?

You can get other vaccines at the same time as, any time before, or any time after the Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine, including routine vaccines and the influenza vaccine.

Who may not be able to get the Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine?

You may not be able to get Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine if:

- You have an allergy to any part of the vaccine. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any allergies you may have.
- You had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it.

If any of these apply, check with your healthcare provider before you get the vaccine.

The Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine is not approved for people under age 12 years.

Although you can get the vaccine if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever, it is best to stay home until you feel better. This helps prevent spreading your illness to others.

Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider to find out when to get the Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine if:

- You have a history of multisystem inflammatory syndrome as a child (MIS-C) or an adult (MIS-A).
- You have a weakened immune system (because of medicine you take or a health problem).
- You have had a stem cell or organ transplant.
- You are getting CAR T-cell therapy (a type of cancer treatment).
- You have a history of myocarditis, pericarditis, or both within 6 weeks of getting a dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

For more information about immunization



Scan the QR code or go to primarycarealberta.ca/immunize.



Call Health Link at 811.

© 2026 Primary Care Alberta, Communicable Disease Control



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). To view a copy of this licence, see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>. The licence does not apply to PCA trademarks, logos or content for which Primary Care Alberta is not the copyright owner.

This material is information provided as part of a specific client's treatment/procedure and is not intended for other uses; questions should be directed to a health care provider. Information is current as of date of print; see primarycarealberta.ca/immunize where vaccine information is updated regularly.