

Novavax Novaxovid™ XBB.1.5

COVID-19 Vaccine Information

Public Health Factsheet

December 2023

Manitoba 

Immunization is one of the most important accomplishments in public health. Over the past 50 years, immunization has led to the elimination, containment and control of diseases that were once very common in Canada.¹ Vaccines help our immune system recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause diseases.

COVID-19 vaccine recommendations are different for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. If you are moderately to severely immunocompromised due to disease (e.g., organ transplant, leukemia, lymphoma) or treatment (e.g., chemotherapy, high-dose steroids), or have an autoimmune condition (e.g., Rheumatoid Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis (MS)), refer to the factsheet titled, "COVID-19 Vaccine: Information for Individuals who have an Autoimmune Condition and/or are Immunocompromised" available at: manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, a virus in the coronavirus family. The virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets and aerosols from someone infected with the virus. Respiratory droplets and aerosols are made when we do every day things like talk, cough, breathe, sneeze or sing. COVID-19 may also spread by touching something that has the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes with unwashed hands. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness, but the virus can affect different people in different ways. Some will become seriously ill and require medical attention.

Up-to-date data on COVID-19 in Manitoba is available at: <https://manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/surveillance/covid-19/index.html>.

Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines play an important role in minimizing the impact of COVID-19 in the population, including significantly lowering the risk of being hospitalized. Vaccines are the best defense against the virus and individuals are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible, and receive the recommended number of doses for the best protection.

There are multiple COVID-19 vaccines approved and available in Canada.

The COVID-19 mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) are the preferentially recommended COVID-19 vaccines. Information about the mRNA vaccines is available at manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html.

Novavax is a different type of COVID-19 vaccine that uses a well established manufacturing technology that has been used to make other vaccines (e.g., the hepatitis B vaccine). Novavax is a protein subunit vaccine that is approved and available in Canada.

Should I get a dose of the updated XBB.1.5 formulation of the COVID-19 vaccine if I have already received more than one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine before?

Evidence suggests that the protection provided by previous doses of the COVID-19 vaccine decreases over time. An additional dose with the updated XBB.1.5 formulation is offered to restore protection that may have decreased over time.

¹ The Public Health Agency of Canada

Novavax Nuvaxovid™ XBB.1.5 may be offered to individuals aged 12 years and older who are unable or unwilling to receive a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine. * As a single dose for those who have previously been vaccinated with one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine with a recommended interval of 6 months from the previous COVID-19 vaccine dose or known COVID infection (whichever is later). However, one dose of XBB.1.5 formulation may be received if it has been at least 3 months from any previous COVID-19 vaccine formulation or known infection. A longer time period between doses provides a stronger immune response.

* As a two-dose series for those who have not been vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine. The second dose is to be administered 3 weeks after the first dose. *If recently infected with COVID-19, it is recommended to delay the next COVID-19 vaccine dose by 4 weeks.*

If you were previously infected with COVID-19 and received a monoclonal antibody treatment (e.g., Sotrovimab, Casirivimab, Imdevimab), you should consult with your health care provider on the best time to receive a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

You can get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other (live or inactivated) vaccines.

Who should NOT get Novavax?

Anyone 11 years old or younger should not be given Novavax.

Anyone who is allergic to an active substance or any ingredients of Novavax vaccine, or if you have had a severe allergic reaction after the first dose of a protein subunit COVID-19 vaccine, should receive an allergy referral and assessment before receiving this vaccine product. An allergic reaction can be life-threatening. For information about any of the COVID-19 vaccine ingredients, please review the vaccine manufacturer's product monograph at [manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html](https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html) or speak with your health care provider.

You can be immunized if you have allergies not related to the vaccine, such as allergies to foods, insect stings or seasonal/environmental allergies. Talk to your immunizer or health care provider about all of your allergies before vaccination.

If you were infected with COVID-19 (e.g., confirmed by a positive PCR test or rapid antigen test (RAT)), you're recommended to wait six months after your infection before getting your next dose of vaccine. But at minimum, you need to wait until your symptoms are gone and recommended isolation period is over.

Possible side effects of Novavax

In general, the side effects are similar to those of other vaccines, generally mild or moderate, and do not last long. They include pain, redness and swelling at the site of injection, body chills feeling tired and feverish, headache, muscle and joint pain, nausea and vomiting.

Over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g., Advil®) may be considered to help manage these adverse events if they occur **after vaccination**.

The rare reaction of myocarditis/pericarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle/lining around the heart) has been reported following vaccination with Novavax/Nuvaxovid™. The signs and symptoms of myocarditis/pericarditis can include shortness of breath, chest pain, or the feeling of a rapid or abnormal heart rhythm. If you experience any of these symptoms, go to the nearest emergency department or health centre.

Serious allergic reactions are also possible following vaccination. In the unlikely event of a severe allergic reaction, it is important to stay in the immunization clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine. Symptoms of allergic reactions can include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This can happen up to an hour after you get vaccinated. If this happens after you leave the immunization clinic, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department or health centre for immediate attention.

Report any serious or unexpected adverse reactions to a health care provider, or call Health Links – Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (toll free in Manitoba).

Your record of protection

All immunizations, including the COVID-19 vaccine, are recorded on your immunization record in Manitoba's immunization registry. This registry:

- allows health care providers to find out which immunizations you (or the people you care for) have received or need to have.
- may be used to produce immunization records or notify you or your health care provider if a particular immunization has been missed.
- allows Manitoba Health and public health officials, to monitor how well vaccines work in preventing disease.

The Personal Health Information Act protects your information and the information for any people you provide care for. You can choose to have this personal health information hidden from health care providers. For additional information, please contact your local public health office or speak with a health care provider.

For information and to obtain your Manitoba immunization record, Manitoba immunization record or Pan-Canadian Proof of Vaccination Credential (PVC), go to: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine.html#certificates-and-records>

Where can I find more information?

For more information about COVID-19 or the COVID-19 vaccines, talk to your health care provider. You can also call Health Links – Info Santé in Winnipeg at **204-788-8200** or **1-888-315-9257** (toll free in Manitoba).

Or visit

Manitoba Government: [manitoba.ca/covid19/index.html](https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/index.html)

Government of Canada: [canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html)
