



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Vaccine (Developed by Pfizer-BioNTech)

What is Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine used for?

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is a vaccine used to prevent COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine can be given to people from 16 years of age and older.

How does Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine work?

The vaccine causes our body to produce protection (such as antibodies) that prevent the COVID-19 virus from entering our cells to make us sick. The vaccine uses a new method (messenger RNA - mRNA, the genetic code for a piece of the virus) to help our bodies make protection against the virus. The vaccine is given by injection with a needle in the upper arm and will require two doses given 21 days apart. You cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine. The vaccines are not live vaccines and do not cause the disease that they are designed to prevent.

As with any vaccine, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine may not fully protect all those who receive it. Even after you have had both doses of the vaccine, continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials to prevent spread of COVID-19.

What are the ingredients in the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine?

Medicinal ingredient:

- mRNA

Non-medicinal ingredients:

- ALC-0315 = ((4-hydroxybutyl)azanediyl)bis(hexane-6,1-diyl)bis(2-hexyldecanoate),
- ALC-0159 = 2-[(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide,
- 1,2-Distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine,
- cholesterol,
- dibasic sodium phosphate dihydrate,
- monobasic potassium phosphate,
- potassium chloride,
- sodium chloride,
- sucrose, and
- water for injection.

Of note, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine vials are not made with natural rubber latex.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Vaccine (Developed by Pfizer-BioNTech)

You should not receive Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine if:

- you are allergic to any of the ingredients in this vaccine, and/or
- you have any symptoms that could be due to COVID-19. Talk with your healthcare professional about your symptoms and getting a COVID-19 test. Your healthcare professional will advise you when you are able to receive the vaccine.

To help avoid side effects and ensure proper use, talk to your healthcare professional before you receive Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. Talk about any health conditions or problems you may have, including if you:

- have had any problems following previous administration of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine such as an allergic reaction or breathing problems,
- have a weakened immune system due to a medical condition or are on a medicine that affects your immune system,
- have a bleeding problem, bruise easily or use a blood thinning medication,
- are pregnant, think you may be pregnant or plan to become pregnant, or
- are breast-feeding.

Other warnings you should know about:

It may take up to seven days after the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to develop protection against COVID-19. Even after you have had both doses of the vaccine, continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials to prevent spread of COVID-19.

How Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is given:

Usual dose:

- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is given after dilution as an injection of 0.3 mL into a muscle of your upper arm.
- You will receive two injections, given 21 days apart. It is very important that you return for the second injection, or the vaccine may not work as well.

Missed Dose:

- If you forget to go back to your healthcare professional at the scheduled time for your next dose, ask your healthcare professional for advice.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Vaccine (Developed by Pfizer-BioNTech)

What are possible side effects from using Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine?

Like all vaccines, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine can cause side effects. Side effects may occur at the following frequencies:

Very common:

- pain at injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- muscle pain
- chills
- joint pain
- fever

Uncommon:

- enlarged lymph nodes

A cool damp cloth where the vaccine was given may help with soreness and, if needed, pain or fever medication (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen) may help with pain or fever.

These are not all the possible side effects you may have when taking Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. If you experience any side effects not listed here, tell your healthcare professional. Should you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms that could be an allergic reaction, seek medical attention right away. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:

- hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
- swelling of the face, tongue, or throat
- difficulty breathing.

If you experience a severe allergic reaction, call 9-1-1, or go to the nearest hospital.

If you want more information about Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine:

- talk to your healthcare professional,
- find the full product monograph that is prepared for healthcare professionals at <https://www.cvdvaccine.ca/files/Pfizer%20BioNTech%20COVID-19%20Vaccine%20-%20Product%20Monograph.pdf>, or
- visit our website at www.rcdhu.com.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Vaccine (Developed by Pfizer-BioNTech)

Resources

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Resources. Patient medication information. December 9, 2020. Available at <https://www.cvdvaccine.ca/files/Pfizer%20BioNTech%20COVID-19%20Vaccine%20-%20Patient%20Medication%20Information.pdf>