

Post COVID-19 Vaccination Information for Patients aged 12 years and above

Today you have received the **COMIRNATY (Pfizer 12 years and over) Vaccine**.

Post Vaccination Observation

Even though the risk of a serious reaction is very low, you will be asked to stay at the Centre for 15 minutes after vaccination to ensure your safety, or longer if your doctor thinks it's necessary.

Notify the centre staff IMMEDIATELY if you experience, hives, skin redness/itching, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, abdominal cramps, nausea/vomiting and/or diarrhoea. If you have already left the premises seek URGENT medical care or call 000.

What side effects should I expect?

As with any vaccine, you may have some side effects after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Most side effects last no more than a couple of days and you should recover without any problem.

- **Common** side effects after **COMIRNATY** include: pain or swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, fever and chills and joint pain.
- **Less common** side effects after **COMIRNATY** include: redness at the injection site, nausea, enlarged lymph nodes, feeling unwell, pain in limbs, insomnia and itching at the injection site.
- Some people will have more significant flu-like symptoms from this vaccination compared to other vaccines and may require time away from normal activities. These symptoms may occur after either dose but are more common after the second dose.

As with any vaccine or medicine, there may be unusual and/or unknown side effects.

Medications are not usually recommended for mild symptoms however you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen for (note, ibuprofen is not recommended during pregnancy) fever and pain if you feel you need it. If you have swelling at the injection site you can apply a cold compress. You should see your GP if you have any symptoms you are worried about.

Rare side effects that have been reported after **COMIRNATY** are:

- Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis)
- Myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the heart lining)
 - very rarely cases of myocarditis and pericarditis have occurred after vaccination
 - most reported cases have been mild and recovered quickly, although longer-term follow-up of these cases is ongoing
 - symptoms typically appear within 1 to 5 days of vaccination, more often after the second dose and more often in younger men (aged under 30 years)
 - myocarditis and pericarditis requires urgent medical attention in a hospital setting

You should seek medical attention after vaccination if:

- You think you are having an allergic reaction. Call 000 if you experience severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing, a fast heartbeat or collapsing.
- You experience chest pain, pressure or discomfort, irregular heartbeat, skipped beat or 'fluttering', faintness, shortness of breath or pain with breathing. Call 000 immediately.
- You have an expected side effect of the vaccine which has not gone away after a few days.
- You are worried about a potential side effect or have new or unexpected symptoms.

For symptoms which are not urgent, you can see your regular healthcare provider (usually your GP). Be sure to tell your doctor that you have recently received the vaccine.

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Vaccine Safety Monitoring and Reporting Side Effects

If you or your health care provider think a COVID-19 vaccine has caused a side effect, we encourage you to report it.

Every report is valuable, as they help to maintain and improve the safety of vaccines. You can report suspected side effects to your vaccination provider or other healthcare professional. They will then make a formal report on your behalf to your state or territory health department or directly to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

If you would prefer to report it yourself, please visit the reporting suspected side effects associated with a COVID-19 vaccine webpage on the TGA website and follow the directions on the page.

<https://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine>

COVID-19 testing after vaccination

Some side effects from COVID-19 vaccination might be similar to symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever).

However, COMIRNATY does not contain any live SARS-CoV-2 virus and cannot cause COVID-19.

You may not need to get a COVID-19 test or isolate:

- if you develop general symptoms like fever, headache or tiredness in the first two days after vaccination, and
- if you are sure that you don't have any respiratory symptoms (e.g. runny nose, cough, sore throat, loss of smell or loss of taste).

However, you should check the current guidelines in your state/territory for the most up-to-date information. This advice may change in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in your local area. You may still need to get a COVID-19 test if you meet other criteria, for example if you are a close contact of a known COVID-19 case. If in doubt, seek medical assessment.

Get proof of your COVID-19 vaccination

Your vaccination details will be sent through to the Australian Immunisation Registry (AIR) today to update your immunisation history.

Your immunisation history statement records your COVID-19 vaccination status and should be updated with details of your covid vaccine within 48 hours.

The easiest way to get your statement is online using either your Medicare account through myGOV or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app. If you can't get your immunisation history statement online or need help, call 1800 653 809. Alternatively, contact the Centre to obtain a copy of your vaccination details.

Remember your second appointment

It is important that you receive two doses of COMIRNATY, for people aged 12 and over this is usually 3 to 6 weeks apart. Your doctor will advise the most appropriate time for you/ your child. The second dose is likely to prolong the duration of protection against COVID-19.

Third dose for people with severe immunocompromise

Some people who are severely immunocompromised should have a third dose of the vaccine to achieve the same level of immunity as the general population. An mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Spikevax (Moderna)) is preferred to Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca) for this third dose.

Booster doses

Booster doses are available to everyone 18 years and older. ATAGI recommends both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for booster doses.

You can book a booster dose if it has been 4 months or longer since your primary course of COVID-19 vaccine. From 31 January 2022 you can book your booster dose 3 months after completing your primary course.

Immunocompromised individuals who have received 3 primary doses of a COVID-19 vaccine are also recommended to have a booster dose in line with the timing for the general population. Find out more about booster doses.

<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-your-vaccination/booster-doses>