

What if I was unsure about vaccinating and missed getting a 1st dose the last time, can I still get my 1st dose of Moderna now?

Yes – come get your first dose. There are enough doses for everybody over 18 in Nunavik, and it is highly recommended as a safe and effective way to protect against COVID-19.

What is “COVID Arm”?

“COVID Arm” is something that less than 1% of Nunavimmiut may have noticed after getting their 1st injection. A few days after your first dose, a red and itchy patch may appear on the arm. COVID Arm disappears by itself within a few days. It is not an infection that needs antibiotics, not an allergic reaction and for those who had this side effect, getting the 2nd dose of Moderna is safe.

Are there treatments for COVID-19?

Yes, however, effective and successful treatment is not guaranteed with much research still required. The disease is new and scientists are still studying the best ways to treat people who get severe cases of COVID-19. So far only one drug (dexamethasone) has been proven to help very ill people make it through. This treatment is not completely effective, even when people receive the medication, many people still get severely ill and die from complications associated with COVID-19. This is why vaccines against COVID-19 are such an important tool; because once you are immunized, your body’s defense system will have learned how to prevent it from making you very sick.

Why do some people with COVID-19 feel no symptoms at all, while others become severely sick?

This is what keeps the pandemic going: Infected people who feel little to no symptoms go on with their lives as usual and pass the coronavirus on to others who can become very sick. Some things that can make it worse: older age, chronic health conditions (e.g., elevated blood pressure, diabetes, obesity) and pregnancy. Vaccination is a good idea for everybody who can receive it. It prevents the virus from making people very sick and it reduces the chances of passing the virus to others.



What are variants?

When the coronavirus infects someone, it uses this person as a “small factory” and multiplies into many copies of itself. Some of these copies will mutate. All viruses - including the coronavirus - continuously mutate as tiny changes occur each time they replicate. We start to talk about a variant when a change in the virus RNA (genetic code) causes an active change in the virus: it may be able to transmit more easily, make people sicker or outplay the protection offered by vaccines. In Québec, there are currently four variants of concern in circulation that were initially detected in the United Kingdom, South Africa, Brazil and Nigeria.

What is the 3rd Wave of COVID19?

Since coronavirus started spreading in Québec in 2020, there have been periods with lots of new documented cases per day followed by periods where it got better. The 3rd wave is the increase in COVID-19 cases that we are currently seeing in Québec (and Canada), due to the circulation of highly contagious variants that are able to infect many more people at once.

If I had COVID-19 in the past, do I still need to be vaccinated?

If you had COVID19, your body was in contact with the coronavirus and your defense system started to learn how to fight it. For this protection to last longer term, it is however recommended that you get at least 1 dose of vaccine. Most people who had COVID-19 will only need one shot, but in some particular situations 2 shots may be needed – talk about it with your healthcare providers to find out what is best for you.

If the 1st dose of Moderna protects at over 90% from getting serious complications from COVID and the 2nd dose can come with expected side effects, why get a second jab?

The first dose trains your immune system to recognize the virus and fight it so it won’t make you sick. The 2nd dose helps your body to remember how to fight it. So, even if there may be side effects with the 2nd dose of Moderna, it’s well worth it to reinforce what the body has learned.



Why is it that if I receive 2 doses against COVID-19, it's still recommended that I wear a mask, physically distance 2 meters, etc.?

Vaccination against COVID-19 provides excellent protection against getting symptomatic and severe COVID-19 disease. However, it is still uncertain how good the vaccines are at preventing infection or transmission. As a precaution, multiple preventive measures must be stacked together to make a difference: vaccines, physical distancing, wearing a mask, handwashing, etc.

How many adults in Nunavik got their 1st dose of Moderna?

So far, over 5000 people received at least one dose of vaccine against COVID-19. Almost half (48%) of adults over the age of 18 decided to protect themselves with the vaccine. The percentage of adults that opted to vaccinate is different depending on age groups and differs widely across the 14 communities.

By age, here is the percentage of adults that got their first dose by mid-April 2021:

- 84% of adults over 70yo
- 64% of adults 55-69yo
- 43% of younger adults 18-54yo

What is “population immunity”?

Viruses cannot survive for long outside of bodies - their only way to survive is to jump from one person to the next. But people who are vaccinated are tougher to infect and the possibility of transmission to others is reduced, so they slow down the spread of coronavirus. If a significant number of Nunavimmiut are vaccinated, the virus will have trouble finding new people to infect. This is why if many people vaccinate, it protects communities from COVID-19 outbreaks; even people who cannot be vaccinated (e.g. children). This is what is referred to as population immunity.



I am tired of wearing/seeing masks and of hearing about COVID all the time. When will this stop?

COVID is all over the news, everywhere, all the time. After more than a year of being in this pandemic, everybody is tired of it and it's easy to be bored and/or horrified with news of the 3rd wave. **Vaccines offer a glimpse of hope - a way out of the pandemic.** Vaccines protect against COVID disease and they reduce transmission of coronavirus to others. Immunizing is a great way to protect yourself and those around you from COVID. **The more people in Nunavik vaccinate, the more protection Nunavik has against outbreaks of COVID-19.**

What about serious side effects, like clots that have recently been in the news?

There are 4 different vaccines that were approved by Health Canada to protect against COVID: the Pfizer vaccine, Moderna vaccine, and the viral vector vaccines by Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca/CoviShield. All of these vaccines passed safety tests and are tightly monitored for any side effects. Clots in younger patients whose immune systems might be reacting too strongly are a concern that has risen with the AstraZeneca and with the Johnson & Johnson vaccines. There have been no clots with the Moderna vaccine.



Some Numbers and Facts

Number of people who received at least one dose of vaccine against COVID-19:

(April 12 2021 data – it changes fast)

In Nunavik: over 5,000 people.

In Québec: over 2 million people, 23.5% of the population.

In Canada: 19.9% of the population.

In the USA: 36.1% of the population.

In the UK: 47.4% of the population.

Worldwide: 448.63 million people.

Sources: <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/situation-coronavirus-quebec/donnees-sur-la-vaccination-covid-19/>

<https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>

Number of people who got COVID-19 disease so far:

In Canada: over a million cases with total deaths reaching 23,356

<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/epidemiological-summary-covid-19-cases.html>

World Wide: 136 million confirmed cases and 2.95 million deaths

<https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases>

<https://ourworldindata.org/covid-deaths>

In 2020, coronavirus was the 3rd cause of death in the USA, after heart disease and cancer

(Source: CDC Center for Disease Control).