

One Minute of Learning: Special Edition



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The COVID-19 Vaccine is Here!

Earlier this week, media shared the information that the vaccine to assist in the protection of COVID-19 had arrived in Alberta & BC. Exciting news, to say the least. The next question is, when will we have access to this vaccine? Frontline healthcare workers are essential to the management and care of our residents in our care communities. Our provinces and health authorities recognize this and wants to ensure that all workers in close contact are protected from the virus, enabling

them to continue to care for those at risk, and needing care. In Alberta, the first vaccinations will be provided to respiratory therapists, ICU staff and physicians and some eligible continuing care health care workers. We have received word that all of AgeCare communities will be notified and scheduled to have the vaccine. Time will be provided to any front line worker receiving notification to book an appointment. To support the process, our sites are compiling lists and providing names



and contact information so that everyone has an opportunity to receive the vaccine. **Please note—Health Link will be calling employees to make appointments. You do not have to call. If you call Health Link to inquire, it slows down the process.**

Why Should You Get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

We all must do our part to protect one another. Immunization is the single most effective means of protecting yourself, and your loved ones from COVID-19. There is great information on our provincial websites regarding the new vaccine. With the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine across the country and in our provinces, we will have the opportunity to slow the spread of the virus, and ensure our most vulnerable and at-risk populations are protected from COVID-19. The vaccine will help protect you, your family, your coworkers, and your Residents.

Who needs a
COVID-19 vaccine?
you.

Protect yourself, your family, your
community & your residents.
Get vaccinated.

Health Link will call staff who are eligible to
receive immunization in this preliminary phase.
For FAQs, visit [agecare.ca/Coronavirus](https://www.agecare.ca/Coronavirus)

AgeCare

Check out both Alberta Health Services and Fraser Health for information on the roll out of their respective plans for distribution of the vaccine.



<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine#.X91JafKiUk>



<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17295.aspx>

Read our list of **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**,
On our Staff page at www.agecare.ca/Coronavirus

What is the New Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine?

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is an mRNA vaccine. Unlike the Influenza vaccine that contains inactivated flu virus incubated in chicken eggs/egg protein, mRNA vaccines use manufactured RNA produced in a laboratory that are specifically coded for a specific disease pathogen. In this case, this mRNA vaccine is coded for the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

How does it work?

The mRNA vaccine actually “teaches” your cells how to make a protein that will trigger an immune response without using the live or inactivated virus that causes COVID-19.

When you are given the vaccine, the mRNA is transferred to your cells using a synthetic lipid nanoparticle. Synthetic means, “made by chemical synthesis, especially to imitate a natural product.” It does not contain human or animal products. Your cells will read the genetic instructions from the mRNA, like a recipe and produce the spike protein. After the protein piece is made, the cell breaks down the mRNA instructions and gets rid of them.

The cell then displays the protein piece on its surface. Your immune system recognizes that the protein doesn’t belong there and begins building an

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immune response and making antibodies. This mRNA does not stick around in your body or interact or change your own cells DNA. This type of vaccine has been used very successfully in the last 10 years to assist with the prevention of Zika virus, HiV-1, rabies and Cytomegalovirus.

What is IN the New Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine?

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has both non-medicinal and medicinal ingredients.

Medicinal Ingredient:

Tozinameran (mRNA encoding the Spike protein for the SARS-CoV-2 virus)

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
 water for injection

The mRNA and the lipid nanoparticles are very fragile. They need to be kept at very low temperatures so that once thawed and delivered during injection, they can do their work quickly teaching your cells to develop the antigens to fight the COVID-19 virus.

The Vaccine is just the next step in the plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We will still need to continue our best practices for a while such as:

- Hand hygiene
- Continuous masking
- Continuous eye protection while at work
- Appropriate use of other PPE in the right circumstances
- Reporting symptoms, self-isolation when necessary and getting a swab
- Avoiding crowds and maintaining appropriate distances at home and at work



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