



WAHA STAFF MODERNA COVID-19 FREQUENTLY FAQ

Updated: January 8, 2021

1. What is the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine?

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (mRNA-1273) is used to prevent COVID-19. This disease is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

2. Who is eligible to receive the vaccine?

The vaccine is approved for people who are 18 years of age and older. It's safety and effectiveness in people younger than 18 years of age has not yet been established.

3. Why is it important to receive the vaccine?

COVID-19 can have serious, life-threatening complications, and there is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you.

Contracting the COVID-19 virus may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. However, experts don't know for sure how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity. COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by creating an antibody (immune system) response without having to experience sickness.

4. Who will get vaccinated first at WAHA?

WAHA is following the guidance from the Ministry to distribute the vaccine in phases.

First groups prioritized to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine are:

- Residents and staff of congregate care home settings, such as Weeneebayko General, Attawapiskat and Fort Albany hospitals for elderly inpatients
- Health care workers (including people who work and/or study in hospitals) and essential caregivers
- Adults in remote First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities
- Adult recipients of chronic home health care



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5. Who will not receive the vaccine at WAHA?

Speak with your health care provider if you have concerns with the following:

- Have a history of anaphylaxis
- Have had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or to any other part of the vaccine
- Have an immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment
- Have an autoimmune disease
- Are immunocompromised
- Discuss medications that you are taking
- Are pregnant, may be pregnant or are planning to become pregnant
- Are breastfeeding
- Have received a vaccine in the last 14 days
- Have symptoms of COVID-19
- Are allergic to any of the vaccine ingredients

6. How is the vaccine administered?

The vaccine is given by an injection (0.5 mL) into the muscle of the arm. For the vaccine to work best, you need to get 2 doses: a single dose and then a second dose one month apart.

7. Will WAHA staff have to pay for the COVID-19 vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine is publicly funded and will be given to required WAHA staff at no additional cost.

8. How effective is the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine?

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is 94.1% effective in preventing COVID-19 beginning 2 weeks after the second dose. This means that staff may not be fully protected against COVID-19 until at least 14 days after the second dose.



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9. Is it possible that getting the COVID-19 vaccine could cause someone to contract the virus?

No. The Moderna vaccine only contains parts of the virus, such as a protein from the virus, or a bit of the genome. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines give instructions for our cells to make a harmless piece of what is called the “spike protein.” The spike protein is found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. This is what allows your immune system to be trained to recognize SARS-CoV-2 later if you get infected, and keeps you protected.

10. Can I receive the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

It is recommended that staff wait until they are asymptomatic before they receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Click here to view [COVID-19 Ministry of Health Guidance Documents](#), and search for the latest ‘Reference Document for Symptoms’ in SharePoint [COVID-19 Updates at WAHA](#), Resources.

11. Can I still get the vaccine if I was positive for COVID-19 in the past?

Experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Immunization with the COVID-19 vaccine is advised regardless of a history of a positive COVID-19 illness.

12. How many doses does staff need to get for the vaccine to work?

You would need to get two doses of the vaccine, 28 days/1 month apart

13. Can I get both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to complete the vaccine series?

There are no data available on the interchangeability of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine with other COVID-19 vaccines to complete the vaccination series. Individuals who have received one dose of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine should receive a second dose of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine to complete the vaccination series.



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14. Can I still get COVID-19 even if vaccinated?

There is a small chance that you can still become infected with COVID-19 after being vaccinated. For this reason, it is very important that we continue with public health measures even once vaccinated. Remember to stay home if you are sick, even if your symptoms are mild.

15. Is the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory for all WAHA staff?

Not currently. WAHA will provide staff with the necessary information so that they can make an informed decision at this time to receive the vaccine or not. Please note at some point; provincial guidelines may require individuals to receive the vaccine before they can enter public spaces.

16. What are the possible side effects of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine?

Health Canada has conducted a rigorous scientific review of the available medical evidence to assess the safety of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. No major safety concerns have been identified in the data that we reviewed. The possible side effects of the vaccine include;

- Pain at the injection site
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle ache and stiffness
- Chills
- Fever
- Swelling or redness at the injection site
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Enlarged lymph nodes

As with all vaccines, there's a chance that there will be a serious side effect, but these are rare. Please contact your health care provider immediately if you experience:

- Hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
- Swelling of the face, tongue or throat
- Difficulty breathing

[Click here to review the Moderna COVID-19 patient information monograph.](#)



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References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Questions
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COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions British Columbia. <https://immunizebc.ca/covid-19-vaccine-frequently-asked-questions>

Government of Canada. Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine. What you should know.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines/moderna.html>

Government of Ontario. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccine-safety>

Patient Medication Information. <https://www.modernacovid19global.com/ca/patient-medication-information>.

Porcupine Health Unit. <https://www.porcupinehu.on.ca/>

Sunnybrook COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions.
<https://sunnybrook.ca/content/?page=novel-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-information>