



Australian Government



# After your Nuvaxovid (Novavax) COVID-19 vaccination

Last updated: 11 February 2022

## About the vaccine

Today you have received the **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine**.

This vaccine can prevent people from becoming ill from COVID-19. The Novavax COVID-19 vaccine does not contain any live virus, and it cannot give you COVID-19. It contains an important part of the SARS-CoV-2 virus called the spike protein. It also contains an adjuvant called Matrix-M, which helps create a stronger immune response. After getting the vaccine, your immune system learns to recognise and fight against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19.

## What to expect after vaccination

As with any vaccine, you may have some side effects after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

**Common** side effects after **Novavax** include:

- pain or tenderness at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- muscle or joint pain
- generally feeling unwell.

**Less common** side effects after **Novavax** include:

- redness or swelling at the injection site
- nausea
- fever
- nausea or vomiting.

These side effects are usually mild and usually go away within one or two days.

If you experience pain at the injection site or fever, headaches or body aches after vaccination, you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen (note, ibuprofen is not recommended during pregnancy). These help to reduce some of the above symptoms (you do not need to take paracetamol or ibuprofen before vaccination). If there is swelling at the injection site, you can use a cold compress.

We don't yet know if anaphylaxis or any other rare side effects are associated with Novavax vaccine. This is because only relatively small numbers of people have received this vaccine worldwide. More information will be available over time.

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
- are worried about a potential side effect or have new or unexpected symptoms
- have an expected side effect of the vaccine which has not gone away after a few days.

For non-urgent symptoms, you can see your regular healthcare provider (e.g. your GP).

### **Vaccine safety monitoring and reporting side effects**

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 [www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine](http://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine) and follow the directions on the page.

### **COVID-19 testing after vaccination**

Some side effects from COVID-19 vaccination might be similar to symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever). However, Novavax does not contain any live 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
- 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.

### **Remember your next appointment**

It is important that you receive two doses of the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine for your primary course. These doses are given at least 3 weeks apart. 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 (Comirnaty (Pfizer) or Moderna) is preferred to Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca). Novavax can also be used for this third dose. More information is available at: [www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-recommendations-on-the-use-of-a-third-primary-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine-in-individuals-who-are-severely-immunocompromised](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-recommendations-on-the-use-of-a-third-primary-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine-in-individuals-who-are-severely-immunocompromised).

## Booster doses

People aged 16 years or over should have a booster dose three months or more after their primary course, to prolong their protection against COVID-19.

People aged 16 and over can have a booster dose of Pfizer.

People aged 18 and over can have a booster dose of Pfizer or Moderna. AstraZeneca is not preferred but can be used in some instances.

Novavax is not currently registered for use as a booster dose.

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.

More information on booster doses is available at: [www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-recommendations-on-the-use-of-a-booster-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-recommendations-on-the-use-of-a-booster-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine).

## Staying up to date

To be considered up to date with COVID-19 vaccination, you must have completed all the doses recommended for your age and health status.

Find out about how to stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines at: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-your-vaccination/stay-up-to-date>

## How is the information you provide at your appointment used

For information on how your personal details are collected, stored and used, visit: [www.health.gov.au/using-our-websites/privacy/privacy-notice-for-covid-19-vaccinations](http://www.health.gov.au/using-our-websites/privacy/privacy-notice-for-covid-19-vaccinations).

## More information

For more information visit [www.health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines-languages](http://www.health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines-languages) or call 1800 020 080. For interpreting services, call 131 450.