

MODERNA SPIKEVAX COVID-19 VACCINE

Why am I being offered the Moderna bivalent vaccine?

Moderna bivalent vaccine can be used as a vaccine for any booster dose in people aged 18 years or older.

Individuals should receive a COVID-19 booster:

- Every six months if aged 65 years or older
- Every six months if aged 18 years or older and severely immunocompromised
- All other adults should receive a dose of COVID-19 vaccine in 2024

The Moderna bivalent COVID-19 vaccine targets the most recent strains of COVID-19 that are circulating in the community.

You will be assessed by a health practitioner prior to being offered the vaccine at a clinic to check that this vaccine is both suitable and recommended for you at this time.

What's in the Moderna bivalent vaccine?

The Moderna vaccine is a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine. This type of vaccine uses a genetic code called RNA to make your body's cells produce the coronavirus' specific spike protein. Your immune system cells then recognise the spike protein as a threat and begin building an immune response against it. The RNA from the vaccine does not change your DNA in any way, and your body quickly breaks it down.

The Moderna vaccine does not contain any live virus, and it cannot give you COVID-19. You can read the full [Spikevax Consumer Medicine Information document](#) on the TGA site for more details.

Benefits of vaccination

The benefits of vaccination with Moderna greatly outweigh the risk of side effects. Very large clinical trials have shown that Moderna is effective in preventing COVID-19 in people aged 12 years and older.

Adults who had 2 doses of Moderna were about 94% less likely to become ill from COVID-19 than people who did not get the vaccine. The vaccine was also effective in people aged 65 years and in adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.

Common side effects

Moderna is a very safe vaccine. It has been given to millions of people around the world. As with any vaccine, you may have some temporary side effects after receiving the Moderna vaccine. This shows your immune system is working. Common side effects after the Moderna vaccine include:

- pain at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- muscle pain
- fever and chills
- joint pain.

Less common side effects after the Moderna vaccine include:

- redness or swelling at the injection site
- swelling or tenderness in the armpit
- nausea/vomiting
- enlarged lymph nodes.

Most side effects are mild and go away within 2 or 3 days.

Rare side effects

Rare side effects after the Moderna vaccine are severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), myocarditis and pericarditis.

In rare cases, myocarditis (inflammation of the heart) and pericarditis (inflammation of the membrane around the heart) can develop after vaccination with the Moderna vaccine. These rare effects on the heart typically occur:

- within 1 to 5 days of vaccination
- more often in men aged under 40.

But they can occur in any gender, at any age, and after any dose. Most cases have mild symptoms and recover well.

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Contact a doctor or go to hospital immediately if you develop any of the following symptoms after a Moderna vaccination:

- chest pain;
- pressure or discomfort in the chest;
- irregular, skipped heartbeats or 'fluttering';
- fainting;
- shortness of breath;
- pain when breathing.

Use in particular groups

People with certain conditions may need additional precautions such as staying for 30 minutes of observation after having their vaccine or consulting an allergy specialist. Tell your immunisation provider if you have had:

- an allergic reaction to a previous dose or to a component of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer)
- anaphylaxis to other vaccines or to other medications – your provider can check that there are no common components with the Moderna vaccine.
- Confirmed mastocytosis with recurrent anaphylaxis that requires treatment.

If you have a bleeding disorder or you are taking a blood-thinning medication (anticoagulant), tell your immunisation provider. Your immunisation provider can help determine whether it is safe for you to have an injection in your muscle and help decide the best timing for injection.

People with a history of capillary leak syndrome should consider an alternative brand. A few cases of capillary leak syndrome flare-up have been reported after vaccination with Moderna.

People with a history of any of the following can receive Moderna, but talk to your GP, immunisation specialist, or cardiologist about the best timing of vaccination and whether any additional precautions are recommended:

- Recent (i.e. within the past 3 months) myocarditis or pericarditis
- Acute rheumatic fever or acute rheumatic heart disease (with active myocardial inflammation)
- Acute decompensated heart failure.

People who develop myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a COVID-19 vaccine should defer further doses and discuss options for further COVID-19 vaccination with their treating doctor.

Moderna is safe and effective for:

- People who are immunocompromised
- People who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy.

People who should not have the Moderna vaccine

It's not recommended that you have the Moderna vaccine if you have had:

- severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of an mRNA COVID19 vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer)
- anaphylaxis after exposure to any component of the vaccine, including polyethylene glycol (PEG)
- myocarditis and/or pericarditis attributed to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine
- any other serious adverse event, that following review by an experienced immunisation provider or medical specialist was attributed to a previous dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine.

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