

COVID-19 vaccination

Information for older persons



Helping to protect those most vulnerable in our community



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Please read this information leaflet for more details on your vaccine, including possible side effects and what to do after you have had your first dose of the vaccine.

- Qatar was one of the first countries in the world to receive the approved Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and begin its vaccination campaign.
- The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine requires two doses to provide maximum protection.
- The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine has been shown to be safe and 95% effective within around 10 days following the second dose.
- The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine has been shown to be safe and effective in clinical trials with older people.

1. What is the COVID-19 vaccine and what is it used for?

COVID-19 vaccine is a vaccine used for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus. The vaccine triggers the body's natural production of antibodies and stimulates immune cells to protect against COVID-19 disease.



2. Why am I being offered this vaccine first?

People who are most at risk from COVID-19 are being offered the COVID-19 vaccination first. This includes older people who often have other health issues that may lower their immune system.

The vaccine you are being offered is the first to be approved as safe and effective by the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH).

Currently, people over 60 years of age, those with multiple specific chronic conditions, and healthcare staff with regular exposure to COVID-19 are prioritized for vaccination. When more vaccines become available, they will be offered to other people.

MOPH aims to have enough COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for all eligible members of the population.



3. What should I mention to my vaccination provider before I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Tell the vaccination provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:



- have any allergies



- have a fever



- have a bleeding disorder or are on a blood thinner



- are immunocompromised or are on a medicine that affects your immune system



- have received another COVID-19 vaccine (other than the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine)

4. What will happen during the vaccination?

The COVID-19 vaccine will be given to you as an injection into the arm. The vaccination series is 2 doses given 3 weeks (21 days) apart. If you receive one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, you should receive a second dose of this same vaccine 3 weeks later to complete the vaccination series.

As with many vaccinations, the Ministry of Public Health recommends recipients to remain under observation of the healthcare team for at least 15 minutes after receiving the injections to monitor for potential side effects.



5. Does the vaccine have side effects?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects in some people, but these are mostly mild and short-term. Side effects for the COVID-19 vaccine are rare, but can include:



- Feeling some pain or tenderness in the arm where you had your injection. This tends to be worst around 1-2 days after the vaccine



- feeling tired



- headache



- general aches, or mild flu like symptoms

Any person with a history of serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to vaccines, medicines or food should not receive the vaccine without consulting their doctor.

6. Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught Covid-19 and not realize you have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment.

Please get tested for COVID-19 if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).



7. Can I go back to my normal activities after getting vaccinated?

You should be able to resume your normal activities as long as you feel comfortable. If you feel discomfort or very tired you should rest and avoid activities such as driving or more strenuous exercise.

8. Will the vaccine protect me?

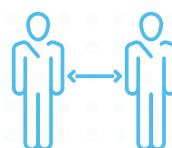
The COVID-19 vaccine that you have had has been shown to reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. Each vaccine has been tested in more than 20,000 people in several different countries and is shown to be safe.

It takes a week or two for your body to build up protection from the vaccine.

Like all medicines, no vaccine offers 100% protection, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

To protect yourself and your family, friends and colleagues you still need to:

- practice social distancing
- wear a face mask
- wash your hands carefully and frequently
- follow the current guidance from the Ministry of Public Health: <https://Covid19.moph.gov.qa/EN/Covid19-Vaccine/Pages/default.aspx>



9. Do I need the COVID-19 vaccine if I have already had the virus?

Yes. COVID-19 is still a relatively new and unknown virus and while research to date indicates that people who have been infected with COVID-19 build up natural immunity it is unclear how long this immunity lasts for and how effective it is.

10. How can i make an appointment to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Initially, COVID-19 vaccination appointment will be by invitation only for people from the three key population groups: older people, people with severe chronic conditions and key healthcare workers with repeated exposure to COVID-19. If you are eligible to receive the vaccine at this stage, you will be contacted by the health authorities for an appointment



11. Where is the COVID-19 vaccine being given?

The COVID-19 vaccines will be available at primary health centers for people who meet the initial priority criteria.

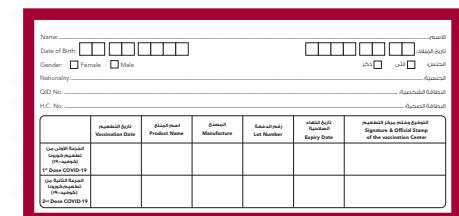
Each of the health centers will have multiple vaccination teams dedicated solely to the COVID-19 vaccine. HMC Home Health Care Service patients can contact the Elderly Day Care Unit regarding vaccinations - for an appointment call **33253128** or **55193240** between **7am to 3pm Sunday to Thursday**.

12. What next after I have had my first dose of the vaccine?

If you have just received your first dose you should plan to attend your next appointment.

You will have received a vaccination card showing your next appointment after approximately 21 days. It is important to have both doses of the same vaccine to give you the best protection.

Keep your vaccination card safe and remember your next appointment for your second dose.



13. What should I do if I am not well when I have my next appointment?

If you are unwell, please inform the vaccination team as soon as possible if you are unable to attend your appointment.



Maintain safe habits

Remember COVID-19 is spread through droplets blown out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

Whether you are waiting to be vaccinated or also if you have had the vaccine – keeping good safety habits will help protect you and others from the effects of COVID-19.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water and regularly clean and disinfect surfaces



- * Maintain a distance of at least 2 meters and avoid physical contact (no handshakes, hugs or kisses) with other people



- * If COVID-19 is spreading in your community, stay home as much as possible and avoid crowds

- Keep taking your normal medication and follow medical advice



- * eat nutritious foods, get enough sleep, don't smoke and stay active

- Adopt a healthy lifestyle to help your immune system





If you need more information on COVID-19 symptoms or if you have questions about possible vaccination side effects call the free healthcare hotline on **16000**



or visit the MOPH website:
<https://www.moph.gov.qa/>

“Adopting a healthier lifestyle when you are younger is an investment in a healthier older, golden age!”

A practical guide to healthy ageing and elderly care:
<https://www.hamad.qa/healthyageing>