



COVID-19 vaccines: Getting Novavax

(MOH, 2022f)

Information about the Novavax (Nuvaxovid) COVID-19 vaccine, including how to book, potential side effects, and who is eligible.

Last updated: 4 April 2022

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About Novavax

The Novavax COVID-19 vaccine (Nuvaxovid) is for adults aged 18 and above who wish to have a different COVID-19 vaccine option – it's free.

A primary course is 2 doses, 3 weeks apart.

Novavax is not approved as a booster vaccine at this time. You can have Pfizer or AstraZeneca for a booster.

Novavax is the first protein-based COVID-19 vaccine to be approved for use in New Zealand and helps prevent you from getting infected and having COVID-19 symptoms, or severe illness.

The Novavax vaccine has been thoroughly assessed for safety by our own Medsafe experts.

Medsafe only grants consent for using a vaccine in Aotearoa once they're satisfied the international evidence shows the benefits outweigh the risks.

The Pfizer vaccine remains the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for use in New Zealand, reflecting its excellent safety and effectiveness profile.

[Novavax factsheet: What you need to know \(PDF, 321 KB\)](#) (/system/files/documents/pages/novavax-what-you-need-to-know9march2022.pdf)

Prescriptions

You will require a prescription for your second dose if your first dose was not Novavax.

You can get a prescription at the vaccinating Novavax clinic or prior to your appointment with your preferred GP. Visits to a GP for a Novavax prescription are free.

Booking Novavax

Only a small number of sites are able to deliver Novavax. Walk-ins can't be accommodated. Please book ahead through [Book My Vaccine](https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/) (https://bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/)

If you're unable to book online, you can call the COVID Vaccination Healthline on [0800 28 29 26](tel:0800282926) (tel:0800282926) (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week). We'll make the booking for you and answer any questions. Interpretation services are available if you need them.

Current sites offering Novavax

Browse the vaccination site map to find a location near you that can administer Novavax.

Select the filter 'Novavax ages 18+ only' under 'Vaccine type'.

[Vaccination site map](https://maps.bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/) (https://maps.bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz/)

What to expect at the appointment

When you arrive for your appointment, a healthcare worker will do a health check with you and answer your questions. You will need to agree to be vaccinated. Remember, you can ask questions at any time.

A fully-trained healthcare worker will then give you the vaccine in your upper arm. You will need to stay for at least 15 minutes so a healthcare worker can look out for you and make sure you are ok.

Once the healthcare worker is confident that you're fine and you are feeling ok, you can leave and carry on with your day.

You can get your second dose of Novavax 3 weeks later. This is important because you will get your best protection against COVID-19 after two doses.

If you feel unwell or are worried about any side effects, speak with your trusted health professional.

Getting other vaccines at the same time

Novavax may be administered before, after, or at the same time as the influenza, MMR, HPV, diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis combination vaccine (Boostrix), and other vaccines.

The only exception to this advice is for the shingles vaccine (Zostavax) where a 7-day interval is advised before or after administering the Novavax vaccine, and the Shingrix and Flud Quad vaccines where a 3-day interval before or after Novavax is recommended.

Novavax and pregnancy

There is currently insufficient data on Novavax to recommend it during pregnancy.

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is the preferred option for someone who is pregnant, trying to get pregnant, or breastfeeding.

[Pregnancy and the Pfizer vaccine \(/node/12447\)](#)

Potential side effects of Novavax

Common side effects

As with any vaccine, you may have some temporary side effects after receiving Novavax.

Common side effects after Novavax include:

- injection site pain or tenderness
- tiredness
- headache
- muscle or joint pain
- generally feeling unwell
- nausea or vomiting.

Some people also experience a rise in their blood pressure after the vaccine. Most side effects are mild and go away within a few days.

Rare side effects of Novavax

The main reported rare but serious side effect after Novavax is severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis). These reactions usually occur soon after you've had your vaccine, which is why you need to wait at least 15 minutes. If you do have a serious allergic reaction, vaccinators are trained to manage these.

It's recommended that you do not have Novavax if you have had a severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine or to any component of the vaccine.

At this stage, information about other rare side effects after the Novavax vaccine is limited due to limited use of this vaccine worldwide. More information will become available over time as we continue to monitor emerging information.

If you are unsure about your symptoms or if they get worse, call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 (tel:0800%20358%205453). If you have an immediate concern about your safety, call 111, and make sure you tell them you've had a COVID-19 vaccination so that they can assess you properly.