



The AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is now available for those aged 18 and older who cannot receive the Pfizer vaccine, and for people who wish to have a different option to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

Pfizer remains the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for use in New Zealand, reflecting its excellent safety and effectiveness profile. Both the Pfizer and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines will protect you against the symptoms of COVID-19.

Both vaccines are free.



For reliable and trustworthy information about COVID-19 vaccines, visit:

covid19.govt.nz/vaccines and health.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines



To book an appointment:

visit **bookmyvaccine.nz**

You'll see a list of vaccination sites where AstraZeneca can be administered, as not all sites are equipped to deliver this vaccine.

or phone **0800 28 29 26**

We'll make the booking for you and answer any questions. Interpretation services are available if you need them.

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**MINISTRY OF
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Your COVID-19 vaccination

Things you need to know about the AstraZeneca vaccine

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Getting your vaccination:



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.

After your vaccination:



You should get your second dose of the vaccine between 4 to 12 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.

Is the vaccine safe?

The AstraZeneca 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.

Can I get it if I'm pregnant?

There is insufficient data on the use of AstraZeneca in pregnant women, so Pfizer remains the preferred choice of vaccine for this group. If you're pregnant, you can get a Pfizer vaccine at any stage of your pregnancy.

Potential side effects

Like all medicines, you might experience some mild side effects 1–2 days after getting your vaccination. Most side effects do not last long and will not stop you from having a second dose or going about your daily life.

The most common reported reactions are tenderness, pain, swelling, itch or redness at the injection site, feeling tired or fatigued, headache, muscle aches, chills, joint pain, fever, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea.



You cannot have AstraZeneca if:

- you've ever had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to the vaccine or its ingredients
- you've ever had capillary leak syndrome: a rare condition causing fluid leakage from small blood vessels
- you've experienced a major blood clot (thrombosis) in combination with low blood platelets (thrombocytopenia) following vaccination with any COVID-19 vaccine.

You should let your vaccinator know if:

- you've ever had a major blood clot or low platelets in the past
- you have an autoimmune condition that means you are more likely to have a clot
- you're pregnant.

It is recommended that people with a history of any of the above conditions discuss their situation, and the benefits and risks of AstraZeneca vaccination with a health professional. Most people will be able to receive AstraZeneca safely, but for some Pfizer may be the best choice.

Rare side effects to watch out for

You should seek immediate medical attention if you develop symptoms in the days or weeks following your vaccination, such as:

- a severe or persistent headache, blurred vision, confusion or seizures
- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling, leg pain or persistent abdominal pain
- unusual skin bruising or pinpoint round spots beyond the site of vaccination.

Serious allergic reactions do happen but are extremely rare. They usually show 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.

If you are unsure about your symptoms or if they get worse, call Healthline on 0800 358 5453. 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.