

COVID-19 Vaccination FAQ

At Líl'wat Health & Healing we have been receiving many questions about the COVID-19 vaccination. We have compiled this document to answer community members frequently asked questions.

Q When will Líl'wat Nation get the vaccine?

A **The vaccine may be here soon.** We do not have an exact date yet. Keep an eye out for Líl'wat Nation vaccine clinic posters, as well as posts on social media and Lilwat.ca

Q Who can get the vaccine?

A **The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for use in adults 18 years of age and older.** If you have recently received another vaccine, you need to wait 14 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. The Moderna vaccine is not recommended for the following people, but may be offered if you have a discussion with your doctor:

- If you are pregnant, may be pregnant or wanting to become pregnant.
- If you are breastfeeding.
- If you have problems with your immune system or are taking any medications that can affect your immune system.
- If you have a serious allergy (anaphylaxis) to polyethylene glycol (PEG). (PEG can be found in some cosmetics, skin care products, laxatives, cough syrups and bowel preparation for colonoscopies. It can also be an additive in some processed foods.)
- If you have had a serious allergy of an unknown cause.
- If you currently have symptoms of COVID-19

Q What is a vaccine?

A **Vaccines are products that produce immunity to a specific disease like COVID-19.** When you are immune to COVID-19 that means you can be exposed to it without becoming sick or can prevent more severe illness if you do get sick.

Q How does an mRNA vaccine work?

A **The Moderna vaccine is a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine.** This vaccine works by delivering the genetic instructions from the virus to our own cells so we produce the spike protein of the virus; this protein then stimulates our own body's immune response. The Moderna vaccine is not a live vaccine and cannot make you sick with COVID-19. It will help to trigger our immune system to protect our body.

Q Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

A **The COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved by Health Canada are safe, effective and will save lives.** To ensure vaccines are safe, there are many processes and standards in place. The COVID-19 vaccine has been rigorously tested. Before a vaccine is offered in Canada, Health Canada will ensure:

- It's safe and it works.
- There are consistent, high-quality manufacturing processes, and that the benefits of getting the vaccine outweigh the risks of not getting it.

In Canada, new vaccines must go through three phases of clinical trials (studies) before being approved for use in the general public. Vaccines continue to be monitored for

safety after they are approved. They are monitored locally, provincially, nationally, and globally. If you have an adverse reaction following immunization, it is important you let your immunization provider know.

Q What are the vaccine side effects?

A **Only minor side effects were observed in clinical trials, similar to ones you might get from any shots.** Some people may have: pain or swelling and redness at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain or fever. These reactions are mild and will generally last one to two days. They are signs that your immune system is working to respond to the vaccine. If you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms of an allergic reaction, seek medical attention right away.

Q How did we get a vaccine so quickly?

A **Scientists across the world have been able to develop COVID-19 vaccines quickly thanks to high levels of government funding, working together across countries, and building on technology they already used in successful vaccines.** The safety and approval processes have not changed. The requirements for safety data in clinical trials are as stringent as ever.

Q Will my life go back to normal after I receive my first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

A **Not yet.** The vaccine requires you to have two doses, at least 28 days apart. We need to keep doing all the recommended public health basics because we know these help stop COVID-19 spreading around communities. The more people in a community who are vaccinated and protected from COVID-19, the harder it is for the virus to spread. Provincial Health Officer (PHO) orders and guidelines remain in place for everyone, even if they have received the vaccine.

Q If I have already been sick with COVID-19, do I still need to get the vaccine?

A **Yes. If you had or may have had, COVID-19 illness you should still get the vaccine.** This is because you may not be immune to the virus that causes COVID-19 and you could get infected again and become sick.

Q Where can I get more information about the vaccine?

A **Here is a list of organizations and their websites:**

First Nations Health Society	www.fnha.ca
BC Centre for Disease Control	www.bccdc.ca
Immunize BC	www.immunizebc.ca

