

# About the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine

## WHAT IT IS

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is the first COVID-19 vaccine available to Nunavut youth aged 12-17.

The vaccine is an mRNA vaccine, using technology that has been in development for 20 years.

After a rigorous approval process, the vaccine received approval from Health Canada for use on people over the age of 16 in December 2020 and children between 12 and 15 on May 5, 2021.

## INGREDIENTS

Medicinal ingredient

mRNA

Non-medicinal ingredients

ALC-0315 = ((4-hydroxybutyl)oxanediyl)bis(hexane-6,1-diyl)bis(2-hexyldecanoate)

ALC-0159 = 2-[(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide

1,2-Distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine

Cholesterol

Dibasic sodium phosphate dihydrate

Monobasic potassium phosphate

Potassium chloride

Sodium chloride

Sucrose

Water for injection

## HOW IT IS ADMINISTERED

The vaccine is administered via injection into the upper arm, given in two separate doses, approximately 21 days apart.

## HOW IT WORKS

The mRNA vaccine teaches our cells how to make a protein that will trigger an immune response, without actually exposing us to the COVID-19 virus.

Once triggered, our body makes antibodies. These antibodies help us fight the infection if the real virus enters our body in the future.

## SIDE EFFECTS

Like all vaccines, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine can cause side effects. The most common side effects of the vaccine are:

Pain at the injection site

Tiredness

Headache

Muscle ache and stiffness

Chills

Fever

Swelling or redness at the injection site

Nausea and/or vomiting

Enlarged lymph nodes

Should you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms of an allergic reaction, seek medical attention immediately.

The vaccine is not mandatory. If you are concerned because of a pre-existing health condition, are pregnant or breastfeeding, please reach out to your local health centre for advice.

The decision is an individual one, but one that will have a direct impact on our communities' health, on Nunavut's public health restrictions and one of the ways we move forward in the months and year to come.