



**PREPARE
PACIFIC**



COVID-19
VACCINATION
ROLL OUT FOR
PACIFIC COMMUNITIES
HANDBOOK

Updated 6th May, 2021



COVID-19

VACCINATION ROLL OUT FOR PACIFIC COMMUNITIES

Last updated 6th May 2021

We understand that you might feel a bit worried about receiving the vaccine. We want to provide you with information to help you and your family to prepare for when it's your turn to be vaccinated.



Who can be vaccinated

The New Zealand Government is making sure the groups who are most at risk of COVID-19 will receive the vaccine first. You can get vaccinated now if you are:

- A Pacific person who is 55 years or older
- A frontline health worker, a managed isolation or border worker
- Living or working in residential care.

You can also get vaccinated if you live in South Auckland and:

- have a serious health condition (for example: asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, lung or kidney disease)
- have a disability
- are pregnant.

People who fall into these categories will receive an email or text message invite to make a booking online or through the Vaccination Helpline. If you or your family member haven't received a message you can call the Vaccination Helpline on:

0800 28 29 26

Call this number between the hours of 8:00am – 8:00pm, 7 days a week.

Household bubbles and caregivers of eligible people can also be vaccinated now

If you live in the same household bubble or you are a caregiver for an eligible person, you can also get vaccinated at the same time.

Why vaccination started in South Auckland

COVID-19 in New Zealand enters through the borders which puts those who are working at the borders at greater risk of catching the virus. Many of our Pacific people are working at the borders, on the frontline or in essential services. Because the international airport is in South Auckland this makes our community more at risk of COVID-19. Most of the COVID-19 outbreaks we have seen in New Zealand have had an impact on the South Auckland community.



Everyone on New Zealand soil who is aged 16 years and over, even non-residents will be eligible for the vaccine

The Government has said that anyone who is on New Zealand soil can be vaccinated regardless of immigration status.

Some personal information is collected to help identify who in New Zealand has had the vaccine. This information is confidentially held in the national COVID-19 immunisation register and will not be passed onto any other government agency.

You must be **16 years** or over to receive the vaccine. The vaccine is **free**.



When the rest of the community will be vaccinated

The programme to vaccinate the rest of New Zealand will start in July 2021.

There is enough vaccine for everyone in New Zealand. We are encouraging everyone in the Pacific community who is eligible to get in early before the main vaccination programme starts.



What is in the vaccine

The vaccine you will receive is called the Pfizer vaccine. It is not a live vaccine which means the virus will not be injected into your body. You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine. What is being injected into your body is something called Messenger RNA. Messenger RNA is not new and has been studied for many years for other infectious diseases like the common flu.



Our elders are at risk

What the vaccine does

Messenger RNA teaches the cells in our body to make a piece of protein to trigger your body's immune system to create antibodies. These antibodies help to protect your body against the virus if you come into contact with COVID-19.

The vaccine does not stay in your body for long – only a few days. Once it has sent a message to the body to make an immune system response our bodies break down the messenger RNA naturally.

The vaccine does not affect your DNA in any way

The Messenger RNA does not enter the nucleus of the cell which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept so it cannot affect our DNA.



RNA



DNA

You will need two doses of the vaccine

- You will need to have two doses of the vaccine, 21 days (3 weeks) apart.
- After the first injection you will have some immunity to COVID-19.
- The second injection you receive increases your protection against the virus.
- Once you have had your vaccination your body's immune system will take a few weeks to fully respond to the vaccine.



You will receive a second dose in 21 days



First injection you will have some immunity



Second injection you receive increases your protection

The vaccine is safe

We know the Pfizer vaccine is safe because it has gone through months of clinical testing with more than 40,000 people. Since then, millions of people around the world of all different ages, gender and ethnicities have already received the vaccine with great success.

From these studies we know that the vaccine has a good safety record and that a severe allergic reaction is very rare.

We have extra safety measures in place

The chance of you having a severe allergic reaction is very unlikely, but if you do all vaccinators have been trained to respond immediately and know exactly what to do.

You will also have to wait 20 minutes after you have been given the vaccine to be observed by a medical professional as an extra safety precaution. This is what we have done in the past with other vaccines, including the flu vaccine.

The vaccine is safe for older people and people with a serious health condition

It is very important that older people and those with a serious health condition get vaccinated because they are more at risk of the harmful effects of COVID-19 than other groups.

There is a very small group of people who cannot be vaccinated but you will be asked about your underlying health conditions and medications you are on before you receive your vaccine.

The vaccine is safe for Pregnant women

If you are pregnant and you choose to be vaccinated, you can get early access. It is important to discuss your individual situation with your midwife or doctor especially if you have other health concerns.

The vaccine is safe for women who are breastfeeding

There have been no safety concerns identified for women who are breastfeeding.



The side-effects you might experience are similar to other vaccines

The vaccine is injected into your arm. People who have received this vaccine most commonly report having a sore arm and feeling tired.

Other reactions people report are muscle aches, a fever or chills and feeling unwell.

Most side effects people experience don't last very long.



**WHAT YOU
MAY FEEL**

Pain at the injection site, headache and fatigue are the most commonly reported reactions.

**WHAT CAN
HELP**

Place a cold, wet cloth or ice pack where the injection was given. Leave it on for a short time.

Do not rub or massage the injection site.

**WHEN THIS
COULD START**

Within 6–24 hours

Muscle aches, feeling generally unwell, chills, fever, joint pain and nausea may also occur (although this is mostly after the second dose).*

Rest and drink plenty of fluids.

Paracetamol or ibuprofen can be taken, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Seek advice from your health professional if your symptoms worsen.

Within 6–48 hours

* These symptoms may not be related to the vaccine and could be signs of an unrelated illness. Seek medical advice if you are concerned.

If you are unsure about your symptoms or they get worse, talk to your GP or call **Healthline on 0800 358 5453**.

The vaccine is effective against the current COVID-19 strains

The evidence to date suggests that this vaccine is effective against the UK and South African variant strains. If there is a new variant found, this type of vaccine can be changed quickly to match a new variant strain.

The vaccine is effective against COVID-19

Studies show that the Pfizer vaccine is 90 to 95 percent effective in those who receive it.

We still don't know how long you will be protected against COVID-19 but we expect it to be at least eight months.

It is possible for some people to get COVID-19 even when they have been vaccinated. But people who have been vaccinated experience much milder symptoms and are unlikely to need hospital care. This is why it is important our older people and those with a serious health condition are vaccinated.

Being vaccinated reduces the risk of passing the virus onto your loved ones.



Some people will receive an email from their family doctor (GP) to book a vaccination. If you are not registered with a family doctor now is a good time to get enrolled.

How to make a booking at a Pacific vaccination centre

A Pacific vaccination centre is up and running at the Otago MIT Building, 53 Otago Road. A second site is in West Auckland at Unit 1-11, 7 Westgate Drive from May 2021.

The centre's have Pacific staff who speak different Pacific languages and can support you and your family or church through the vaccination process.



If you are eligible to be vaccinated now, you can receive your vaccination at any of the centres that are operating but if you want to receive your vaccination at the Pacific vaccination centre this is what will happen:

1. People will receive a text or email inviting them to book a time
2. Click on the link in the email or text for the online booking system
3. Select Otago or Westgate as your Vaccination Centre
4. Choose a date and time
5. Confirmation will be sent by text or email

To make a booking, call 0800 28 29 26 between 8:00am – 8:00pm, 7 days a week

For more information you can contact:

Your family doctor

Healthline on **0800 358 5453**

Prepare Pacific website **www.preparepacific.nz**

COVID 19 vaccines website:

**[www.covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing /
covid-19-vaccines](http://www.covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-vaccines)**

**This resource was developed based on
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