

## Summary COVID-19 Vaccine Info Session with Dr. Heejune Chang, March 29<sup>th</sup>

### COVID-19 Vaccine Information

#### Where Should I get information?

- Province of Manitoba
  - o General COVID information
  - o <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covidindex.html>
- Shared Health
  - o Screening and test results
  - o <https://sharehealthmb.ca/covid19/>
- End Homelessness Winnipeg
  - o Aimed at sector serving homeless but lots of good general information too
  - o Good community information
  - o <https://endhomelessnesswinnipeg.ca/covid-19-resources-winnipegs-homeless-serving-sector/>

#### Public Health Guidelines

- physically distance as much as possible (recommended 2 meters [6 feet] whenever possible) to avoid transmission
- stay home if you're feeling sick (sore throat, cough, runny nose, fever, etc.) – symptoms may be mild
- continue to wash hands often
- wear a mask where required
- practice cough hygiene – cough into your arm or tissue
- limit social contacts – ex: visiting friends and family – this is a huge source of transmission
- avoid non-essential travel outside of the province

#### COVID Testing

- anyone with symptoms is eligible for COVID testing even if the symptoms are mild
- testing sites are in every region including testing centres, doctor's clinics, drive-thru sites, mobile sites, walk-in sites
- testing can be done on a walk-in basis or by appointment
- check online for locations:
  - o <https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/testing/locations.html>

#### COVID Vaccines in Manitoba

- Information is updated daily at 12:30pm on the Government of Manitoba website
- Canada has agreements for 7 different vaccines, some of which await approval
- Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna (mRNA vaccines)
  - o Main vaccine being used
- AstraZeneca Oxford (adenovirus vaccine)
  - o Approved and a small shipment received in Canada about one month ago
- Johnson & Johnson (adenovirus vaccine)
  - o Recently been approved – none received yet in Canada

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### COVID Vaccine Effects

- FACT: in vaccine trials for effectiveness, safety is the number one outcome of concern
- FACT: mRNA cannot alter one's own DNA – mRNA has no interaction with DNA
- FACT: you cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccines – the vaccines only contain a tiny portion of the virus that isn't actually responsible for the infection
- FACT: the vaccines DO NOT protect you from other bacteria or viruses
- FACT: the vaccines are free for everyone in Manitoba, this includes people who may not have Health Card ID or full health care coverage with the province
- FACT: 2 doses are required for protection (except for Johnson & Johnson)

### COVID Vaccines

- A vaccine stimulates our immune response by exposing it to a unique part of the virus
- This creates antibodies which can recognize and target the virus if you are exposed to the virus in the future
- The COVID-19 vaccine prevents us from getting infected by the COVID-19 virus and also prevents severe disease outcomes if infection does occur
- As of now, the vaccines appear to have effectiveness against virus variants
- Ongoing areas where more information is needed:
  - o Not yet sure if the vaccine will prevent transmission (spreading disease to others) or how well it could prevent transmission – also not sure if vaccination will potentially reduce how infectious you are if you are carrying the virus
  - o Children are not currently prioritized for the vaccine because they were not included in vaccine trials – adults were the priority because the older you are, the more serious the outcomes can be if you get infected with COVID-19
  - o Not sure yet what the timing of future booster doses may be, further research needs to be conducted

### Before Receiving the Vaccine

- A consent form must be completed before you get the vaccine
  - o If possible, you can complete the consent form before your appointment
  - o <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html>
- If you have just received any other vaccine, you should wait a minimum of 14 days before you get the COVID-19 vaccine
- If you have a Provincial Health Card, please bring it – if not, other identification is will work
- You can bring one person to accompany you to your vaccine appointment if needed

### What to Expect when getting the vaccine

- There may be some expected side-effects with getting the vaccine – as is expected with many vaccines
- About 25-60% of people experience mild side effects that may last a day or two including:
  - o Pain at the site of the needle
  - o Very low fever
  - o Sore muscles

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- Fatigue
- Headache
- If these symptoms last more than three days, you should get a COVID test because you may have been infected before you received the vaccine
- Rare Side Effects
  - Are caused by an allergic reaction
  - Everyone who gets the vaccine is asked to stay for 15 minutes after vaccine for observation (or 30 minutes if you have existing allergies)
  - Look for signs of an allergic reaction:
    - Itchy rash ('hives')
    - Swelling of the face, tongue, or lips
    - Difficulty breathing
    - Or any symptoms if you're feeling unwell
  - If you have a severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine you will be advised NOT to get another dose – every case of allergic reaction is reviewed individually to decide the best course of action
  - If you have a history of allergic reactions to vaccines/medications, you may still get the COVID-19 vaccine but should discuss with your doctor first

### After Receiving the Vaccine

- Please continue to:
  - Physically distance
  - Limit social contacts
  - Stay home if you're sick
  - Practice hand wash and cough hygiene
  - Wear a mask when required
  - Limit travel
- Wait at least 28 days after you receive the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine before receiving any other vaccines

### Which Vaccine Should you get?

- If you are eligible get the first vaccine that is available to you
- More locations where you can get the vaccine and more types of vaccines will be available over time
- Any vaccine that is approved is known to be effective in preventing you from getting COVID-19 and in reducing the seriousness of your illness
- Getting one type of vaccine does not mean you can't get a different type later on

### COVID Vaccine Eligibility

- Eligibility had to be strict because of the limited supply and began with highest risk individuals
- Eligibility is CHANGING often – eventually, any adult who wants a vaccine should be able to receive one
- Eligibility updates can be found here:
  - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html>



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- Eligibility is done mainly be age
- Health care workers in certain settings may also be eligible regardless of age
- Those who are pregnant/breastfeeding or immune-suppressed ARE ELIGIBLE for the vaccine, but it is recommended they speak with their doctor FIRST about benefits/risks
  - No known risks for either group
  - [https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset\\_library/en/covidvaccine/covid19\\_vaccine\\_pregnant.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/covidvaccine/covid19_vaccine_pregnant.pdf)
  - [https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset\\_library/en/covidvaccine/immunisuppressed-autoimmune-vaccine-factsheet.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/covidvaccine/immunisuppressed-autoimmune-vaccine-factsheet.pdf)
- Eligibility calculator: where you can type in your specific indicators (ex: age) to see if you're eligible for the vaccine
  - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/queue-calculator.html>
- There are different locations eligible people can get vaccines:
- At super sites & pop-up clinics, many priority groups have already been vaccinated including:
  - select health care workers in a variety of health care settings
  - certain community service workers who work in congregate settings
  - priority First Nations groups aged 45 and above (**as of March 29, 2021**) (see government website for **current** age indicator)
  - general population aged 65 and above (**as of March 29, 2021**) (see government website for **current** age indicator)
- Medical clinics and pharmacies, priority groups for vaccines are slightly different including:
  - priority First Nations groups aged 30 to 45 (**as of March 29, 2021**) (see government website for **current** age indicator) / general population 50-64 (**as of March 29, 2021**) (see government website for **current** age indicator)
  - IN ADDITION TO a high-risk chronic condition as listed here: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html>

### COVID Vaccine Sites

- MB Vaccine shot finder: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/finder.html>
  - Pop-up sites are also listed on this website – shows which family medicine clinics and pharmacies have the vaccine
- Large super sites in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk, Thompson, & Morden

### QUESTIONS

**Q:** Can someone (ex: a caretaker) get the vaccine if they are under 60 but the people who live in an apartment building are 60+?

**A:** These locations may not be considered a congregate living setting if the residents are living in their own self-contained suite. At this time, the staff would be ineligible for the vaccine.

**Q:** Is there information about whether the vaccines will protect against all COVID-19 variants?

**A:** So far, the vaccines do have some effectiveness against the variants. Unsure if it is the same level of protection as the original COVID-19 strain or less protection, but it still provides some protection.

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**Q:** Can you help others who are eligible make vaccine appointments?

**A:** Feel free to help people who are eligible for the vaccine through all steps of the process. You can help people navigate online, fill out forms, go with people to appointments, etc.

**Q:** People in the community have discussed holding off for a vaccine with a high efficacy rate. What can you tell us about this?

**A:** It seems like the mRNA vaccines are more effective, but the trials for the AstraZeneca vaccine are ongoing. Research has found that the effectiveness of AstraZeneca may be increased when the second dose is delayed longer. AstraZeneca has THE SAME effectiveness as the mRNA vaccines in preventing severe outcomes of COVID-19. Do not advise waiting for a particular vaccine, get the first one you can.

**Q:** If you receive a Pfizer vaccine now, could you receive a Moderna vaccine in the future?

**A:** There is currently no reason that you couldn't get a Pfizer vaccine now and a Moderna later, say for a booster vaccine.

**Q:** Why is a consent form required for the vaccine?

**A:** Don't have the 'why' at the moment, but a consent form is standard procedure with vaccines. There is an enhanced consent form for people who are pregnant and for those who have an autoimmune disease or are immunosuppressed for some reason.