

Covid-19 Vaccination Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

WHAT IS VACCINATION?

Vaccination is a safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases, before they come into contact with them.

Vaccination creates antibodies to fight specific infections and makes your immune system stronger without causing illness. Most vaccines are given by an injection.

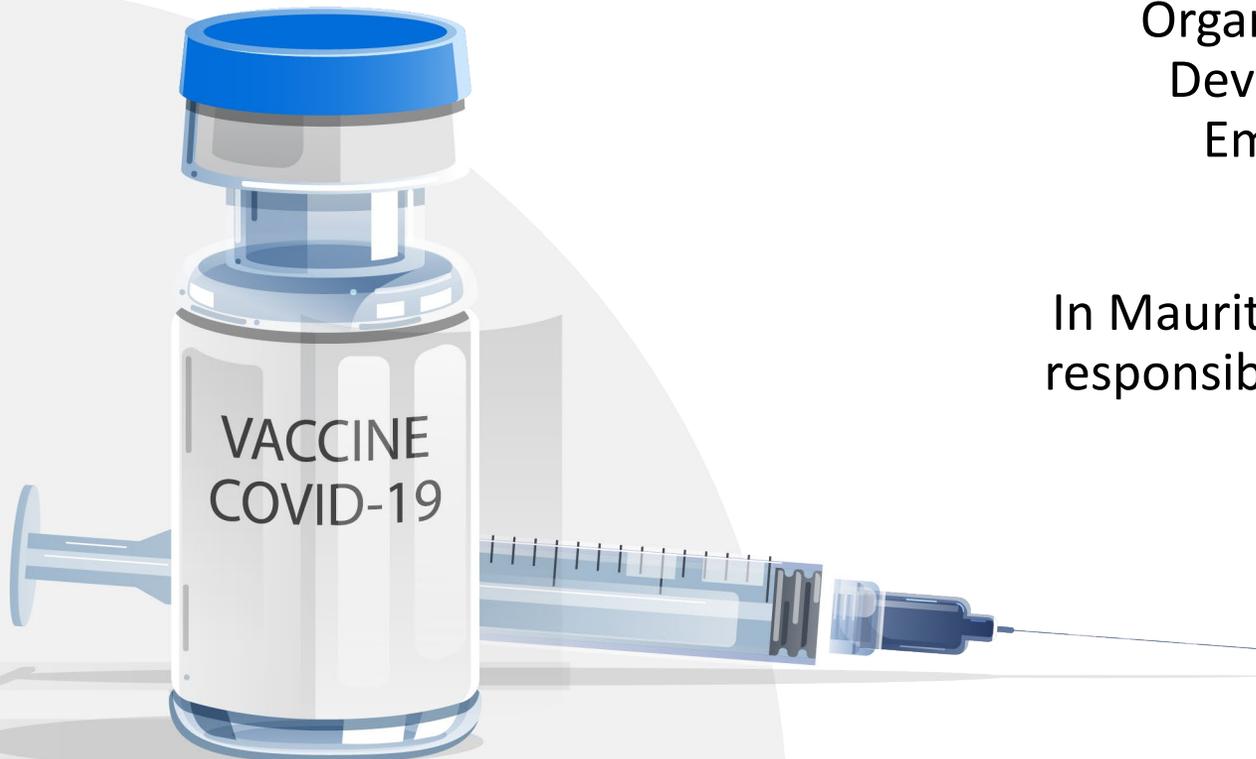


IS THERE A VACCINE AGAINST COVID-19?

Yes.

There are now several vaccines the World Health Organization (W.H.O.), the FDA, or the European Development Agency, validated and issued an Emergency Use Listing (EULs) for their use.

In Mauritius, the Ministry of Health is the only authority responsible for providing the vaccines that will be in use.



HOW DOES THE COVID-19 VACCINES PROTECT US AGAINST THE DISEASE?

The COVID-19 vaccines produce protection against the disease, as a result of developing an immune response to the coronavirus.

Developing immunity through vaccination means that there is a reduced risk of developing severe and fatal forms of the disease, in all vaccinated.

All current COVID-19 vaccines significantly reduce severe forms of the disease, particularly in the elderly and people with comorbidities. It greatly reduces cases of death caused by COVID-19.

Getting vaccinated also protects people around you, because if you are protected from getting infected and from the disease, you are less likely to infect someone else. This is particularly important to protect people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, such as healthcare providers, older or elderly adults, and people with other medical conditions.



WHY SHOULD I GET VACCINATED?

To protect yourself and to protect those around you.

Not everyone can be vaccinated. This group of people includes very young babies and children, pregnant women (for the moment) and highly allergic people. Therefore, they depend on others being vaccinated to ensure they are also safe. Vaccination is therefore an act of solidarity towards them.

In Mauritius, vaccination is also an act of solidarity towards all the frontliners and those who work in tourism, because you will participate in achieving group immunity which is the only way for us to reopen our frontiers, without the danger of the epidemic coming back.



A grey silhouette of the island of Mauritius, showing its irregular coastline and several smaller islands to the west and south.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE COVAXIN VACCINE PRESENTLY BEING USED IN MAURITIUS?

As per interim data of Phase-3 Clinical Trials, COVAXIN showed 81% efficacy, which reflects that after the two doses, the vaccine produces adequate antibodies against COVID-19 virus.

In countries where COVAXIN is being used, it is a vaccine with approval for restricted use in emergency situation that may prevent COVID-19. The authorities have granted permission for administration of COVAXIN for restricted use in emergency situation in public interest, where risk of not vaccinating is very high.

WHO CAN GET VACCINATED IN MAURITIUS?

Currently, individuals and groups of people who are prioritized by the Govt./ Ministry of Health (e.g. frontline workers, individuals with WAP, etc.) will be covered in this endeavor.

You should not get the COVAXIN if you:

- Have any history of allergies.
- Have fever.
- Have a bleeding disorder or are on a blood thinner.
- Are immunocompromised or are on a medicine that affects your immune system.
- Are pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding.
- Have received another COVID-19 vaccine.
- Have any other serious health related issues, as determined by the Vaccinator/Officer supervising vaccination.



HOW IS THE COVAXIN VACCINE ADMINISTERED?

The vaccine (COVAXIN) will be given to you as an injection into the deltoid muscle of the upper arm.

As per current recommendation, vaccination series is **2 doses given 4 weeks apart.**



WHERE CAN I BE VACCINATED?

At all 5 regional hospitals, at mobile vaccination centres, in some of the community hospitals and government mediclinics.

C-Care has been authorized to open Covid-19 vaccination centres at Clinique Darné, Wellkin Hospital, C-Care Clinic Grand Baie and C-Care Clinic Cap Tamarin. As per strict government guidelines, vaccination will be proposed as priority to companies and frontliners holding a Work Access Permit (WAP) and by reservation only to avoid crowds and long queues.

We encourage you to consult the Ministry of Health official site and other official communiqués for all information about where and when to get vaccinated.



DO I HAVE TO PAY TO GET VACCINATED?

At this point in time, the vaccine is provided free of charge by the Government of Mauritius.

A contribution to the administration costs of Rs 300 will be requested per vaccine administered, in agreement with the authorities.



FOR WHOM IS THE VACCINE PARTICULARLY BENEFICIAL?

All those most at risk of having a serious or fatal form of COVID-19.

- Persons over 60 years of age
- Obese persons regardless of age
- People with comorbidities, in particular:
 1. Diabetics
 2. People with cardiovascular diseases
 3. People with respiratory diseases or people with kidney diseases, including those undergoing hemodialysis
 4. People with cancers and people with autoimmune pathologies
 5. Immunocompromised people: corticosteroid and immunosuppressive therapy, chemotherapy, HIV carriers, primary immune deficits, etc.

People who have had COVID-19 in the past, must discuss the possibility of taking a single dose if the infection occurred within 3 months (one dose may be sufficient).



WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF SIDE EFFECTS?

As with any other vaccine, some people may experience some side effects which are generally mild:

- Injection site pain
- Injection site swelling
- Injection site redness
- Injection site itching
- Stiffness in the upper arm
- Weakness in injection arm
- Body ache
- Headache
- Fever
- Malaise
- Weakness
- Rashes
- Nausea
- Vomiting

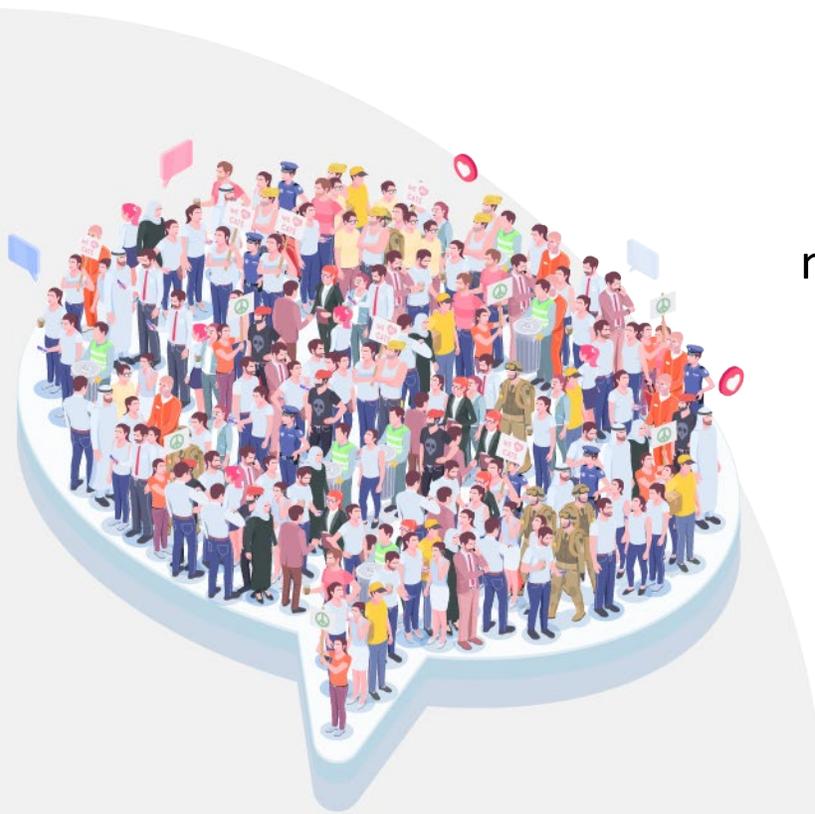
Your vaccination provider will ask you to stay after each administered dose for monitoring. This is to observe any remote chance of serious allergic reaction.



HOW DO VACCINES PROTECT INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES ?

People vaccinated do not usually catch the disease, and if they do, it would be in a minimal or moderate form. The more severe the form, the more you can spread the virus, and the more you risk contaminating others. There will be much less risk for people with moderate forms to contaminate others compared to those with severe forms of the disease.

Therefore, after a certain percentage of people are vaccinated, the country will reach what is described as collective or group immunity.



WHAT DOES 'HERD IMMUNITY' OR 'GROUP IMMUNITY' MEAN ?

'Herd immunity', also known as 'group immunity', is the indirect protection from an infectious disease that happens when immunity develops in a population, either through vaccination or through previous infection.

The virus can only survive in the human body. If it cannot be transmitted from an infected person to a vaccinated person before the immunity of the infected person kills it, the virus just cannot survive. It will not give rise to any new cases of COVID-19. If an infected person meets only vaccinated people, the virus in that person will not be transmitted to any of these vaccinated people, with the result that the virus will die out. This phenomenon will happen often if a good proportion of the population is vaccinated.

Sometimes, especially at the beginning of the vaccination campaign, the infected person will encounter an unvaccinated person and may infect him or her. Thus, sporadic cases may occur, but as the number of people vaccinated increases, this will be less frequent, until it becomes exceptional.





CAN I BE VACCINATED IF I BREASTFEED MY BABY?

No. Currently, breastfeeding and pregnant women are not administered COVAXIN.



IF WE ARE ALREADY VACCINATED, MUST WE CONTINUE WITH COVID-19 SANITARY MEASURES SUCH AS SOCIAL DISTANCING, REGULAR HAND WASHING AND WEARING A MASK?

While the vaccine is an important part of COVID-19 protection, it is essential to carry on with the practice of COVID-19 sanitary measures (frequent and thorough hand washing using soap and water or sanitizer, wearing a mask and social distancing) for personal safety and prevention of community transmission.

This will be an even more important part of our protection once our frontiers reopen.





THANK YOU

For more information, please refer to the Ministry of Health as the sole official source of information relating to vaccination in Mauritius.

You may also call the Hotline 8924 (available 24/7).