

## Editorial

### Australia's COVID-19 vaccines

Safe and effective vaccines will help protect you and your community from COVID-19. The vaccines will be free and voluntary.

Australia has agreements for three COVID-19 vaccines. This includes the Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Novavax. The number of doses required depends on the vaccine. Both Pfizer and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines will require two doses.

Australia's independent medicines regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), has strict standards for reviewing possible COVID-19 vaccines. They will only approve vaccines that are safe and effective.

Australia has a plan for distributing the vaccines as quickly as possible when they are ready. The plan lists the order of groups to receive the vaccines first, and the locations where the vaccine doses will be available in Australia.

#### The first vaccines

Medical experts have advised on who should be the first to receive COVID-19 vaccination. It is important that the first vaccines go to the people who need them most.

The Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has now been provisionally approved in Australia. Vaccination will begin in February 2021. The first vaccines will be provided to:

- quarantine and border workers,
- frontline at-risk healthcare workers,
- aged care and disability care residents,
- and residential aged care and disability workers.

Part of the next group to receive the vaccination includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults.

At the moment, the best thing you can do is stay up to date and continue to be COVIDSafe. The Australian Government will provide information about when and where the vaccine will be available.

#### Locations

The Pfizer vaccine will be available through 30 to 50 hospitals across urban and rural Australia.

Other sites will be available to manage and distribute other vaccines as they are approved by the TGA. These sites include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Controlled Community Health Services, general practice clinics, existing Commonwealth GP respiratory clinics, state-run vaccination clinics and pharmacies.

#### What to do to keep COVIDSafe

To keep you and your community safe during the coronavirus pandemic, you should continue to:

- Stay two big steps away from other people and avoid physical contact with people outside your household.
- Stay home if you feel unwell and get tested for COVID-19. You must stay at home until your results come back
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitiser.
- Always cough or sneeze into your arm or a tissue and put the tissue in the bin straight away.
- Have the COVIDSafe app to help health officials notify you if you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- Get vaccinated, to help protect yourself, community and Elders from COVID-19

[More information about COVID-19](#)

It is important to stay informed through official sources. Learn more at [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au) or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080.