



Australian Government



# After your COVID-19 vaccination

## About the vaccine

Today you have received **COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca**.

This vaccine can prevent people from becoming ill from COVID-19. COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca does not contain any live SARS-CoV-2 virus (the virus that causes COVID-19), and it cannot give you COVID-19. It contains the genetic code for an important part of the SARS-CoV-2 virus called the spike protein that is carried into your cells by a harmless common cold 'carrier' virus (an adenovirus). Your body then makes the spike protein and uses it to learn to recognise and fight against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The adenovirus has been modified so that it cannot replicate once it is inside cells. This means it cannot spread to other cells and cause infection.

## What to expect after vaccination

As with any vaccine, you may have some side effects after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

**Common** side effects after **COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca** include:

- pain, swelling, tenderness, redness or itching at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- muscle pain
- nausea
- fever and chills
- feeling unwell
- joint pain.

**Less common** side effects after **COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca** include:

- enlarged lymph nodes
- pain in limb
- dizziness
- decreased appetite
- stomach pain.

These side effects are usually mild and usually go away within one or two days. Some recipients will experience more significant flu-like symptoms from this vaccination compared to other common vaccinations and may require time away from normal activities. These symptoms may occur after either the first or second dose but are more common after the first dose.

If you experience pain at the injection site, fever, headaches or body aches in the first 1-2 days after vaccination, you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen. These help to reduce some of the above symptoms. You do not need to take paracetamol or ibuprofen before vaccination. If there is swelling at the injection site, you can use a cold compress.

**Rare** side effects that have been reported after **COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca** are:

- severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

**There is a possible link to a rare clotting condition**

- Experts are examining a small number of reports of people with unusual clots after vaccination with the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine. Almost all reported cases have been in the United Kingdom and Europe. One probable case was reported in Australia on 1 April 2021. These cases are being investigated by authorities in the UK and Europe and by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in Australia.
- These rare clotting conditions have occurred in the brain or abdomen and are serious. The symptoms have started between day 4 and 20 after vaccination and the conditions have generally been severe, requiring hospitalisation.
- While it is not yet known if COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine is causing these rare and unusual clots, it is important for people to know authorities in the UK, Europe and Australia are investigating these cases. The results of this investigation will be available soon.

**You should seek medical attention after vaccination if:**

- you think you are having an allergic reaction. Call 000 if you experience severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing, a fast heartbeat or collapsing
- you have an expected side effect of the vaccine which has not gone away after a few days
- you are worried about a potential side effect or have new or unexpected symptoms, particularly in the 4-20 days after vaccination, such as new severe headache that does not settle with paracetamol or other painkillers, or abdominal pain.

Be sure to tell your doctor that you have recently received the vaccine. For symptoms which are not urgent, you can see your regular healthcare provider (usually your GP).

## **Vaccine safety monitoring and reporting side effects**

You can report suspected side effects to your vaccination provider or other healthcare professional. They will then make a formal report on your behalf to your state or territory health department or directly to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

If you would prefer to report it yourself, please visit the TGA website and follow the directions on the page: <https://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine>.

## **COVID-19 testing after vaccination**

Some side effects from COVID-19 vaccination might be similar to symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever). However, COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca does not contain any live SARS-CoV-2 virus and cannot cause COVID-19. You may not need to get a COVID-19 test or isolate:

**[health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines](https://www.health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines)**

- if you develop general symptoms like fever, headache or tiredness in the first two days after vaccination, and
- if you are sure that you don't have any respiratory symptoms (e.g. runny nose, cough, sore throat, loss of smell or loss of taste).

However, you should check the current guidelines in your state/territory for the most up-to-date information. This advice may change in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in your local area. You may still need to get a COVID-19 test if you meet other criteria, for example if you are a close contact of a known COVID-19 case. If in doubt, seek medical assessment.

### **Remember your second appointment**

It is important that you receive two doses of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, about 12 weeks apart. The second dose is likely to prolong the duration of protection against COVID-19.

### **How is the information you provide at your appointment is used**

For information on how your personal details are collected, stored and used visit <https://www.health.gov.au/using-our-websites/privacy/privacy-notice-for-covid-19-vaccinations>