



Australian Government

## COVID-19 VACCINATION

# How in-home and community aged care recipients and workers can get a COVID-19 vaccination

Information current as at 7 May 2021

The Australian Government is making it possible for older Australians and in-home and community aged care workers to get vaccinated quickly and safely. The vaccination of all older Australians and those who care for them is the most effective protection against COVID-19.

### COVID-19 vaccine safety in Australia

It is normal to have questions about the new COVID-19 vaccines and to possibly feel hesitant about getting the vaccine. Throughout the pandemic, the Australian Government continues to follow expert medical advice. Your safety is the number one priority.

There are currently two safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines available in Australia, AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines. Both vaccines are highly effective at preventing death and severe illness among people who contract COVID-19.

People receiving in-home and community care, and workers providing aged care services, will be offered a COVID-19 vaccine in line with the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommendations:

- **People aged 50 years and over** will receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.
- **People aged under 50 years** will receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

### Protecting older Australians, yourself and the broader community

While Australia has been relatively successful in avoiding sustained COVID-19 outbreaks, the risk of community transmission remains significant.

COVID-19 is much more likely to be severe in older people and people with certain medical problems than in young healthy people. Experience from the second wave,

particularly in Victoria, is that one third of people aged over 80 who contract COVID-19 will not survive.

For this reason, our focus is on protecting people who are most vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 and those who care for them.

## How can recipients of in-home and community aged care get a COVID-19 vaccination?

All people aged 70 years and over are able to get a vaccine now. People aged 50-69 years will be able to get a vaccine:

- from 3 May 2021 at GP respiratory clinics and state and territory vaccination clinics.
- from 17 May 2021 at GPs.

### 1. GP options for the AstraZeneca vaccine

**Available now:** GP clinics, GP respiratory clinics and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. Find a participating GP or clinic through the [eligibility checker](#) on the Department of Health website.

People with mobility challenges are encouraged to contact their GP to discuss options for a home visit to receive a vaccination.

### 2. State and territory AstraZeneca vaccination clinics

**State and territory COVID-19 vaccination clinics are coming on line progressively:** Arrangements for different states and territories clinics are happening progressively. Refer to the [eligibility checker](#) for available clinics in your state and territory. If you can't find details for nearby clinics please check regularly as the listings will be updated as clinics become available.

## How can in-home and community aged care workers get a COVID-19 vaccination?

### 1. GP options for workers aged 50 and over

**Available now:** In-home and community aged care workers aged 50 years and over can access an AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccination at a GP clinic, GP respiratory clinic or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service.

Find a participating clinic through the [eligibility checker](#) on the Department of Health website.

## 2. State and territory vaccination clinics (Pfizer for workers aged under 50 and AstraZeneca for workers aged 50 and over)

[State and territory clinics are coming on line progressively](#): In-home and community aged care workers can visit state and territory vaccination clinics to receive the appropriate COVID-19 vaccine in line with the recent recommendations by the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI).

Arrangements for different states and territories clinics are happening progressively. Refer to the [eligibility checker](#) for available clinics in your state and territory. If you can't find details for nearby clinics please check regularly as the listings will be updated as clinics become available.

## Frequently asked questions

### I'm not sure whether to get the vaccine, how can I decide?

While the COVID-19 vaccine is not mandatory, it is strongly recommended – especially for vulnerable Australians and those who care for them.

When you decide to receive a vaccine it's important you understand the benefits and risks associated with both:

- receiving the vaccine, and
- not receiving the vaccine.

It is also important that you are aware of side effects that may occur. Understanding these benefits and risks can help you to make an informed decision.

If you're unsure, it's a good idea to speak with your GP or other health professional. They can help you make a decision that is right for your personal situation. A [decision guide](#) is also available to help you make an informed choice about getting vaccinated.

### Why are people 50 years and over receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine?

The risk of serious illness from COVID-19 far outweighs the potential risk of side effects from the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

This is particularly the case for Australians aged 50 and over, who are far more vulnerable to severe impacts from COVID-19 than in young healthy people.

It's important to know that the AstraZeneca vaccine:

- is highly effective at preventing death and severe illness among people who have contracted COVID-19
- the incidence of the blood-clotting syndrome is very rare.

## I am aged 50 years or over, can I wait longer and get the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine?

Access to any COVID-19 vaccine approved for use in Australia is prioritised, ensuring those at greatest risk are vaccinated first.

Specific vaccines will be administered based on availability and clinical guidance on appropriate vaccines for people.

## Can I get a flu vaccine at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine?

It is recommended you wait 14 days between getting a flu vaccine and a COVID-19 vaccine. It is important to plan for both vaccinations.

Your flu vaccination should occur:

- 14 or more days **before** your first Pfizer dose
- 14 or more days **after** your second (and final) Pfizer dose
- 14 or more days **before or after** your first AstraZeneca dose
- 14 or more days **before or after** your second (and final) AstraZeneca dose.

## More information

- visit [health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines](https://health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines)
- call the National COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline on **1800 020 080**
- view [COVID-19 vaccine information in your language](#).