Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

COVID-19 VACCINE (Pfizer - BioNTech)

What does it do?

The *COVID-19 vaccine* helps protect you against severe COVID-19 infection. It means you could have milder or no COVID-19 symptoms and recover faster.

Before you start

- Tell your health professional if you currently feel unwell or have a fever.
- Tell your health professional if you have HIV, receive dialysis, take medicines which weaken your immune system, or if you have had heart inflammation (myocarditis) after a previous *COVID-19 vaccine*.
- Tell your health professional if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How is it given?

The *COVID-19 vaccine* is given as an injection into a muscle. It will be given to you by a health professional.

You will need to wait for at least 15 minutes after having your vaccine, to check you don't have an allergic reaction.

What if you forget a dose?

You can manage your booking online at bookmyvaccine.covid19.health.nz or by phoning 0800 28 29 26.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, aches and pains, nausea, headache, tiredness or weakness) Pain, tenderness or redness at injection site	This usually passes after a few days, take paracetamol if needed. Tell your health professional if troublesome.
Symptoms of allergy including: skin rash, itching, swelling, trouble breathing	Tell your health professional immediately
Symptoms of heart inflammation including: fluttering, pounding or pain in your chest, shortness of breath	Tell your doctor immediately

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- The *COVID-19 vaccine* may cause swelling of your lymph nodes (a lump in your armpit or neck). Tell your doctor if they are still swollen after 6 weeks. If you have a CT scan or breast screening appointment, tell your health professional you have had your vaccine within the last 6 weeks.