

“Is it ok to mix Moderna and Pfizer vaccines to complete my vaccine series?”

Yes. If you got a Moderna or Pfizer mRNA vaccine for dose 1, vaccine experts in Canada have said you can have either vaccine for dose 2. This is based on what we know about how vaccines work and experience with other vaccines.

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How are the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines similar?

Moderna and Pfizer both use mRNA as the active ingredient. mRNA is a molecule that instructs your cells to produce the coronavirus spike protein. Your immune system then makes antibodies and memory cells that can respond if you are exposed to Covid-19. Clinical trial results for Moderna and Pfizer were similar. In real world studies, both give excellent protection, including against variants.

How are the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines different?

There are small differences in the lipids, salts, and stabilizers that the vaccines use to deliver mRNA to your body. There are also small differences in the mRNA molecules. Both vaccines instruct your body to make the same, full version of the spike protein. Experts do not think that these differences matter for your immune response.

Why am I being offered a different mRNA vaccine for dose 2?

A changing vaccine supply may mean that the vaccine you got for dose 1 is not available when you get dose 2. Many people will be offered a different mRNA vaccine for dose 2 than they got for dose 1.

Is “mixing” safe?

Yes, mixing is safe. Moderna and Pfizer are both very safe vaccines. The most common side effects after mRNA vaccines are a sore arm, headache, tiredness, fever, and muscle aches. Side effects are expected to be similar if you have a different mRNA vaccine for dose 2.

Have we “mixed” vaccines before?

It is common to mix different brands of vaccines to complete a vaccine series. For example, different brands of vaccines for tetanus, polio, and hepatitis have been combined.

Will “mixing” protect me as well as 2 doses of the same vaccine?

While we don’t have data yet about mixing mRNA vaccines, expert consensus tells us that mixing Moderna and Pfizer will protect as well as two doses of either vaccine.

Can I just wait to get the same vaccine I had for dose 1?

Getting fully vaccinated with the first approved vaccine you are offered will give you the best protection from Covid-19 (including variants like Delta) sooner. We don’t know how long you will have to wait to get the same brand of vaccine for dose 2.

Check out our graphic:

Are You Fully Vaccinated? / Êtes-vous pleinement vaccin e ?

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/-recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines-en.pdf>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccines-highly-effective-against-b-1-617-2-variant-after-2-doses>
<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.05.24.21257744v1>

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