

# COVID-19 Immunization for Individuals with Allergies and Other Health Conditions

August 2023

## Allergy (Skin) Testing

- Allergy (Skin) testing is not recommended prior to COVID-19 vaccine administration.
- COVID-19 vaccine is not approved for this indication and will not be provided to clinicians for this purpose.
- The validity of epicutaneous and intradermal testing for COVID-19 vaccines has not been established.<sup>1</sup>
- Based on expert opinion, skin testing with the vaccine has not been helpful in determining if patients will react to COVID-19 immunization.<sup>2</sup>

*This policy is evergreen and will be updated as new information becomes available.*

| Issue                                     | Recommendation   |
|---|--|
| Previous Anaphylaxis to:                  | <p>Note: All events of anaphylaxis should be reported to Alberta Health Services (AHS) as per the instructions available <a href="#">here</a>. AHS Medical Officer of Health/designate will conduct an assessment and follow AHS processes for referral to an allergist. Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is recommended following anaphylaxis to any vaccine.</p>   |
| mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) | <p><u>To proceed with an mRNA vaccine</u></p> <p>Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is recommended prior to receiving a subsequent dose of mRNA vaccine.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Recommendations for future doses will be based on the advice of the allergist and AHS Medical Officer of Health/designate.</p> <p><u>Alternatively</u> complete subsequent dose(s) with Novavax.</p> <p>Consultation with allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is <u>not</u> required prior to receiving Novavax vaccine.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization.</p> |
| AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine   | <p>Recommend mRNA vaccine for subsequent doses. Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is <u>not</u> required before receiving the mRNA vaccine.</p> <p>If mRNA vaccine is contraindicated, recommend Novavax for subsequent dose(s). Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is <u>not</u> required before receiving the Novavax vaccine.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization.</p>  |
| Janssen COVID-19 vaccine                  | <p>Recommend mRNA or Novavax for subsequent dose(s).</p> <p>Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is <u>not</u> required before receiving the mRNA or Novavax vaccine.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization.</p>  |
| Novavax COVID-19 vaccine                  | <p>Recommend mRNA vaccine for subsequent dose(s). Consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is <u>not</u> required before receiving the mRNA vaccine.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization</p> <p>If mRNA vaccine is contraindicated, consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is recommended prior to receiving a subsequent dose of vaccine.</p>  |

| Issue  | Recommendation  |
|--|---|
| Component of the vaccine (eg. PEG)                       | <p>Confirm history of documented anaphylaxis to the component including reviewing history of tolerance to common medications (see table 2).</p> <p>If anaphylaxis confirmed, provide alternative COVID-19 vaccine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PEG allergy – offer Novavax (if 18 years of age or older).</li> <li>• Tromethamine allergy – offer Novavax (if 18 years of age or older)</li> <li>• Polysorbate allergy – offer mRNA vaccine</li> </ul> <p>If able to tolerate medications in table 2, proceed with COVID-19 immunization. NO allergy assessment is required.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization.</p> <p>If anaphylaxis confirmed to both PEG and Polysorbate, consultation with an allergist or another physician with expertise in allergy assessment is recommended prior to receiving a subsequent dose of vaccine.</p> |
| To any other vaccines                                    | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>There is no contraindication to receipt of COVID-19 vaccine for those with a history of anaphylaxis to other vaccines.</p> <p>Recommend 30 minute wait after immunization.</p>   |
| <b>Previous allergic reactions (non-anaphylaxis) to:</b> |   |
| mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna)                         | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine                           | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| Janssen vaccine  | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| Novavax vaccine  | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| To component of COVID-19 Vaccine                         | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| To any other vaccines                                    | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| <b>Other health conditions/issues</b>                    |   |
| Autoimmune conditions                                    | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| Immunodeficiencies                                       | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| Mast Cell disorders                                      | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |
| Other non-vaccine related allergies                      | <p>Proceed with COVID-19 immunization</p> <p>NO allergy assessment is required</p>  |

**Table 2**

| Other products containing PEG   | Other products containing Tromethamine (Tris)                        | Other products containing Polysorbate 80  |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cough syrup</li> <li>• Laxatives</li> <li>• Medical bowel preparation products for colonoscopy</li> <li>• Skin care products</li> <li>• Dermal fillers</li> <li>• Cosmetics</li> <li>• Contact lens solutions</li> <li>• Ultrasound gel</li> </ul> | <p>Component in contrast media, oral and parenteral medications.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical preparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Vitamin oils</li> <li>○ Tablets</li> <li>○ Anticancer agents</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cosmetics</li> </ul> |

*References:*

- 1 Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (April 10, 2021). <https://csaci.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-04-10-UPDATE-COVID-19-Vaccine-Testing-Administration-Guidance.pdf>
- 2 Alberta Experts – physicians specializing in allergies.
- 3 National Advisory Committee on Immunization. (2021). Recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines. <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>