

Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines: Is There a Difference?

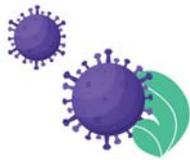
June 7, 2021

The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are essentially identical – they are both very effective, very safe, and well studied.



The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are essentially the same product made by different companies.

They are like two brands of bottled water – the same product but packaged by different companies.



The vaccines work the same way – they are both mRNA vaccines.

They both provide instructions (“mRNA”) to teach your body's immune system to recognize the COVID virus so that you can fight off infection if the real virus enters your body in the future. The vaccines do not contain the virus.



Both vaccines are very effective in protecting against COVID illness.

In large scientific studies, both vaccines were found to be about 95% effective in preventing COVID illness after 2 doses.

Studies show they are both very effective in preventing COVID-related hospitalization or death in the rare event that a vaccinated person gets infected.



Both vaccines have similar side effects, which are mild and temporary.

The most common possible side effects include shoulder/arm pain at the site of injection, body and muscle pains, chills, feeling tired and feeling feverish. These side effects typically improve in about one to three days.

Neither vaccine negatively affects pregnancies or your ability to have children. Neither vaccine causes blood clots.

Both vaccines are injected into the upper arm – very quickly and with very little discomfort. One vaccine is not more painful than the other.



Vaccination clinics and sites receive either of the vaccines, depending on which vaccine is available.

The deliveries of each vaccine to Canada can vary from week to week.



The Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines are equally effective. Take whichever one is offered to you, knowing that they will both protect you and the people you love from getting sick from COVID-19.



We hope you find this bulletin useful! We invite you to share it widely, use it as the script to record an audio or video file, or translate it into more languages to share with others. Please be sure to credit the source: Women’s College Hospital, OCASI, TAIBU Community Health Centre and Refugee 613.

Accurate as of June 7, 2021

The information in this bulletin has been validated by Canadian doctors: Meb Rashid MD, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto; Vanessa Redditt, MD, Lecturer, University of Toronto; and Isaac I. Bogoch, MD, Associate Professor, University of Toronto.



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