# Monitoring and reporting side effects

**Updated November 2021**

Guidance for disability support workers monitoring people with disability after administration of the COVID-19 vaccines.

## What to monitor for

People with disability may experience minor side effects after vaccination. For most people, side effects last no more than a couple of days and they will recover without any problems.

Common reactions to vaccination include:

* pain, redness and/or swelling at the injection site
* mild fever
* headache
* tiredness
* headache
* muscle pain
* chills
* fever
* joint pain.

These side effects usually go away within one or two days. If people with disability experience pain at the injection site or fever, headaches or body aches after vaccination, they can be supported to take paracetamol or ibuprofen. These help reduce the above symptoms. They do not need to take paracetamol or ibuprofen before vaccination. If there is swelling at the injection site, a cold compress can reduce the swelling.

Serious reactions, such as allergic reactions are extremely rare. **They usually occur within 15 minutes of receiving a vaccine.** It is important to stay with people with disability during this time.

If an individual becomes unwell after the vaccination or you are concerned about their condition, **you must report it.** You should follow the standard escalation process in your organisation and alert the vaccine provider **at once**.

The nominated person/s in your organisation must notify all adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) to the local health department as outlined in the table below:

| **Where to report in each state / territory**  |
| --- |
| NSW | 1300 066 055 or [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)  |
| Victoria | 1300 882 924 (option 1) or [www.safevac.org.au](http://www.safevac.org.au)  |
| Queensland | Contact your local Public Health Unit or COVID\_AEFI@health.qld.gov.au  |
| Western Australia | 08 6456 0208 or wavss@health.wa.gov.au  |
| ACT | 02 5154 9800 or [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au)  |
| South Australia | 1300 232 272 or healthvaccinesafety@sa.gov.au  |
| Northern Territory | Contact your local Public Health Unit or [www.health.nt.gov.au](http://www.health.nt.gov.au)  |
| Tasmania | Report directly to the TGA at [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au)  |

More information is available on the TGA website at [www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine](http://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine).

### Frequency of select common adverse events reported within 7 days following each dose of Comirnaty (Pfizer) in phase II/III trial

|  | **12-15 years** | **16–55 years**  | **>55 years**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Dose 1**  | **Dose 2**  | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** |
| **Injection site pain** | 86% | 79% | 83% | 78% | 71% | 66% |
| **Fever** | 10% | 20% | 4%  | 16% | 1% | 11% |
| **Fatigue**  | 60% | 66% | 47% | 59% | 23% | 51% |
| **Headache**  | 55% | 65% | 42% | 52% | 25% | 39% |
| **Chills** | 28% | 42% | 14% | 35% | 6% | 23% |
| **Muscle pain** | 24% | 32% | 21% | 37% | 14% | 28% |
| **Joint pain** | 10% | 16% | 11% | 22% | 9% | 19% |
| **Required paracetamol** | 37% | 51% | 28% | 45% | 20% | 38% |

### Frequency of select common adverse events reported within 7 days following at least one dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca in phase II/III trial aged 18 years and older

|  | **18–55 years**  | **56–69 years** | **≥70 years** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** |
| **Injection site pain** | 61% | 49% | 43% | 34% | 20% | 10% |
| **Injection site tenderness** | 76% | 61% | 67% | 59% | 49% | 47% |
| **Fatigue**  | 76% | 55% | 50% | 41% | 41% | 33% |
| **Headache**  | 65% | 31% | 50% | 34% | 41% | 20% |
| **Muscle pain** | 53% | 35% | 37% | 24% | 18% | 18% |
| **Fever** | 24% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

### Frequency of select common adverse events reported within 7 days following each dose of Spikevax (Moderna) in phase III trial

|  | **12-17 years**  | **18-64 years** | **≥65 years** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** | **Dose 1** | **Dose 2** |
| **Injection site pain** | 93% | 92% | 87% | 90% | 74% | 83% |
| **Lymph node swelling at the axilla**  | 23% | 21% | 12% | 16% | 6% | 9% |
| **Fever** | 2.5% | 12% | 0.9% | 17% | 0.3% | 10% |
| **Fatigue**  | 48% | 68% | 38% | 68% | 33% | 58% |
| **Headache**  | 45% | 70% | 35% | 63% | 25% | 46% |
| **Chills** | 18% | 43% | 9% | 49% | 5% | 31% |
| **Myaligia** | 27% | 47% | 24% | 62% | 20% | 47% |
| **Arthralgia** | 15% | 29% | 17% | 46% | 16% | 35% |
| **Nausea/vomiting** | 10% | 18% | 9% | 21% | 5% | 12% |