Australian Government

COVID-19 VACCINATION

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
Victoria	1300 882 924 (option 1) or 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
South Australia	1300 232 272 or healthvaccinesafety@sa.gov.au
Northern Territory	Contact your local Public Health Unit or www.health.nt.gov.au
Tasmania	Report directly to the TGA at 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.

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%