

Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine: What You Should Know



What is the Novavax vaccine?

The newest FDA authorized COVID-19 vaccine, Novavax, is different than the other COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the US. Novavax is a protein subunit vaccine that uses the same, long-used, technology seen in other widely used vaccines such as HPV, hepatitis B, and flu. Novavax is a two-dose series given 21 days apart, available to those aged 12 years and older.

Novavax is a traditional protein subunit vaccine.

While each of the authorized vaccines works to help our body's immune system recognize and attack the COVID-19 virus, Novavax utilizes an older, more familiar vaccine technology.

- Protein subunit COVID-19 vaccines contain pieces (proteins) of the virus that causes COVID-19
- They also contain an additive along with fats and sugars intended to help the immune system respond to the virus and protect you in the future
- They do not contain mRNA



Novavax side effects are proving to be minimal.

Novavax's temporary side effects are not unlike the typical side effects seen with other COVID-19 vaccines. Pain/tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site, as well as fatigue, muscle pain, headache, joint pain, nausea/vomiting, and fever. Protein subunit COVID-19 vaccines cannot cause COVID-19 or other illnesses.

What does the data show?

Clinical trial studies conducted in the spring of 2021 showed that the Novavax vaccine demonstrated 90% effective against stopping COVID-19 infections and 100% effective in preventing COVID-19 related deaths.

The vaccine is said to have prompted broad immune responses against all COVID-19 variants, including BA.5, according to ongoing trials. Subunit vaccines like Novavax do not use any live virus and cannot change or influence our genes. We have also learned that Novavax:



- Has been used effectively in many other countries, including Canada, since 2021
- Does not contain ingredients used in other vaccines that trigger allergies
- Uses same familiar technology used in popular vaccines such as flu, HPV, hepatitis B, and shingles

Novavax has gone through the FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) process and is an alternative option for those who cannot or will not receive [mRNA vaccines](#).

Novavax is available for use as a booster for those 18 years and older, at least 6 months after completion of a primary series, if you cannot or will not receive an updated mRNA dose.

Vaccination is still the best choice.

It's important to remember that vaccinated is best. Regardless of vaccine brand, vaccination is your best protection from COVID-19 and its effects. Talk to your provider about which option is best for you.