



COVID-19 vaccines

Special Bulletin – 25 July 2021

Information for COVID-19 vaccine providers

OFFICIAL

This is a special bulletin for health professionals and services, and subscribers to the weekly newsletter for COVID-19 vaccine providers.

Key points

Pregnant people are now eligible

1. The Commonwealth Government have announced that people who are pregnant aged 16 years and over are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination.
2. People who are pregnant should be offered Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine at any stage of pregnancy. People who are pregnant who received their first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca can receive a second dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca or Pfizer vaccine, although Pfizer vaccine is preferred.
3. We encourage people who are pregnant to get vaccinated at their doctor's clinic or health care provider to support people to discuss their health and any questions they have.
4. People who are pregnant can also get vaccinated at Victoria's vaccination centres effective from Monday 26 July 2021.
5. To provide evidence of eligibility people should complete an [Eligibility Declaration Form](#). State vaccination centres can cite a signed [Eligibility Declaration Form](#) and must have printed copies available for signature in order to proceed with vaccination.
6. People who are pregnant can book via the Coronavirus Hotline or via the online booking portal. Bookings will be made through general or public appointments via Coronavirus Hotline or via the online booking portal (i.e. where state vaccination centres are using the CVMS platform)
7. Existing [consent forms and clinical advice](#) should continue to be used to support vaccination. The department has previously advised health services on recommended actions in response to changed ATAGI advice. View the related [special bulletin distributed 19 April 2021](#). This advice has not changed.
8. To support any decision-making, vaccination providers and people who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy are encouraged to refer to the Australian Government's [Shared decision making guide for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy](#).

Updated vaccine safety advice for people who are pregnant

- Global surveillance data from large numbers of people who are pregnant have not found any significant safety concerns with COVID-19 vaccines given at any stage of pregnancy. There is also evidence of antibody in blood and breastmilk, which may offer protection to infants through passive immunity.
- People who are pregnant who contract COVID-19 have an increased risk of severe illness and adverse pregnancy outcomes. COVID-19 during pregnancy also increases the risk of complications for the baby.

- International data has indicated mRNA vaccines – including Pfizer – are safe to be given at any stage during pregnancy and are also suitable for people who are breastfeeding.

People who are breastfeeding or planning pregnancy

The Australian Government's advice remains unchanged for people trying to become pregnant and breastfeeding:

- People who are trying to become pregnant do not need to delay vaccination or avoid becoming pregnant after vaccination.
- If you are breastfeeding, you can have the Pfizer vaccine. You do not need to stop breastfeeding after vaccination.

Learn more on the [Australian Government's webpage for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy](#).

Evidence for eligibility

Where a person presents for an appointment and says they are eligible but doesn't have evidence of their eligibility, they can complete an [eligibility declaration form](#). Health services are encouraged to accept declarations as evidence of eligibility and provide these at point of vaccination where required.

Victorian Government evidence of eligibility document.

- [Eligibility Declaration Form](#)

Safety

Capillary leak syndrome

People who have a history of capillary leak syndrome and who are aged 60 years or older may be eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine. These people should be referred to the Victorian Specialist Immunisation Service (VicSIS) for further review and determination of eligibility. For guidance on how to make a referral, visit [Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre \(MVEC\) website](#).

Personal Protective Equipment

Staff undertaking vaccinations should undertake hand hygiene and wear gloves, eye protection and a P2/N95 face filtering respirator. A risk assessment should be undertaken to determine if a further PPE is required.

Information for health services

The department has previously advised health services on recommended actions in response to changed ATAGI advice. View the related [special bulletin distributed 19 April 2021](#). This advice has not changed.

More information and resources

- [Updated eligibility guidance for state vaccine centres](#)
- [Updated evidence for eligibility](#)

Australian Government

- [COVID-19 vaccination – Shared decision-making guide for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy](#).

Contact us

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccination program in Victoria, contact the Victorian Department of Health by emailing COVIDvaccination@health.vic.gov.au.

In case you missed it

For previous updates, please click the button to view the last **Department of Health special bulletin** distributed on [12 July 2021](#).