Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

COVID-19 Vaccines: Tips for Consumers

Health Canada recently approved several vaccines to prevent COVID-19, and millions of Canadians will be getting vaccinated over the coming months. These vaccines will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and will save lives.
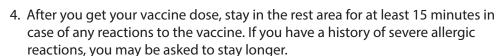
Different companies are making different types of COVID-19 vaccines, and each vaccine has its own dosing schedule. Getting the right vaccine at the right time will be important. You can help to prevent a vaccine mistake or error.

SafeMedicationUse.ca shares the following tips to help make sure that you safely receive your COVID-19 vaccine:

1. Information about the COVID-19 vaccines is available from Health Canada. If you have questions, talk to your health care provider. Together, you can decide if the benefits of the vaccine outweigh any risks that might apply to you.

2. Wear a short-sleeved shirt when you go to get your vaccine. This makes it easier for the nurse or pharmacist to inject the vaccine into the right spot and prevent a shoulder injury.

3. At your appointment, collect documentation of vaccination, including the vaccine name and date. Show this documentation when you go for your second dose. You can use the MyMedRec or CANImmunize app to save this information.

4. After you get your vaccine dose, stay in the rest area for at least 15 minutes in case of any reactions to the vaccine. If you have a history of severe allergic reactions, you may be asked to stay longer.

5. Before leaving the rest area, ask how and when to book an appointment for the second dose.

6. When you go for your second dose, show the documentation from your first dose. You should expect to receive the same vaccine product (e.g., Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech). Ask if you are receiving the same vaccine product for the second dose.

Medication safety bulletins contribute to Global Patient Safety Alerts.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and Patients for Patient Safety Canada.

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.

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