

What is immunity?

Immunity is your body's ability to resist disease and occurs when your body is exposed to a disease organism, such as a virus. There are a few ways to acquire immunity:

Vaccine-Induced Immunity: You're exposed to a part of a disease organism or a killed disease organism through vaccination

Infection-Acquired Immunity: You're directly exposed to the disease

When either happens, your immune system is triggered to produce antibodies that attack the disease. Your immune system has a memory and if you are exposed to the same or a very similar disease in the future, it will make the same antibodies much more quickly and help fight off the infection much faster and more strongly, often even before you have symptoms.

Do I have protection after having COVID-19?

We know there is some level of protection after someone has had COVID-19. People with very mild or asymptomatic (showing no symptoms) infection produce a lower immune response. Studies show the strength and **length** of protection from having COVID-19 varies greatly and will leave many people vulnerable to getting COVID-19 again.

Are vaccines better at providing immunity?

Trying to build immunity by getting COVID-19 is dangerous to you and others around you as you can pass it on. COVID-19 can cause serious illness, long term symptoms that impact your daily life, and even death.

Vaccination is a much safer and predictable way to develop immunity to COVID-19, as it isn't possible to get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

Should I get vaccinated after I have had COVID-19?

Yes. Even if you have had COVID-19, the safest way to ensure you are protected from getting it again is to get the vaccines.

Evidence from the US shows that risk of reinfection of COVID-19 for an unvaccinated person who had the illness previously is between **two and five times higher** than the risk of reinfection of COVID-19 for a vaccinated person who had COVID-19 illness.

When can I get the vaccine after I have had COVID-19?

You can get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you feel better and no longer have to isolate. Find out how to get a vaccine near you: bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/vaccine-registration-eligibility

ImmunizeBC has detailed descriptions of how vaccines work.

You can find additional information on the COVID-19 vaccines at bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine

