

FIRST AID IN CASE OF ADVERSE EFFECTS

COVID-19 VACCINE



Adverse effects are rare but can occur after an injection. In any cases, you should report your condition to the health authority

ALLERGIC REACTION AND ANAPHYLAXIS



After an injection, skin can present a local reaction (swelling, redness, sensation of pain). Some people can also be severely allergic to a component resulting in a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction (a severe allergic reaction).

FIRST AID STEPS

1. People receiving the vaccine and particularly for at-risks groups are **advised to stay 15 minutes** in a vaccination centre after immunization, to monitor the effect. Anaphylaxis generally arrives 2-3 minutes after.
2. **Access EMS** as soon as you recognise the person is experiencing a severe allergic reaction.
3. **Help the person to lie down** unless they are experiencing breathing difficulties. In that case, help them to **sit down**.
4. **If the person has an epinephrine autoinjector, help them to use it.** The best place for injection is the middle of the outer side of the thigh. The injection can be administered through clothes if the clothes are not thick.
5. If a person with symptoms of severe allergic reaction was treated but did **not respond to the first dose** of epinephrine within five to ten minutes, **a second dose may be considered**.
6. **Keep monitoring** the person's responsiveness and breathing regularly until EMS is accessed.

FEELING FAINT



Fainting is a temporary loss of responsiveness due to a fall in blood supply to the brain. The person will experience a short period of feeling faint before they faint. This is the ideal time to provide first aid - before they collapse.

FIRST AID STEPS

1. Help the person to **sit or lie down** in a safe and comfortable position, where they cannot fall.
2. Ask the person to do **physical counterpressure manoeuvres** (see below) to improve blood flow to their brain. Alternatively, you could offer to raise their legs for them if they lie down.
3. **Reassure** the person and **observe** them closely for changes in their level of response or breathing. If possible, try to establish why they feel faint and whether there is anything further you can do to help them.



Squatting

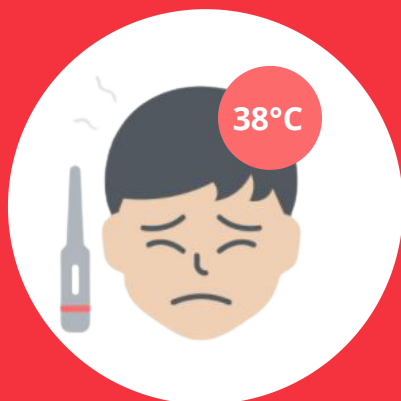


Leg tensing



Arm tensing

FEVER



It should be noted that the frequency of systemic reactions, particularly fever, fatigue and headaches, is greater with the 2nd dose than with the 1st dose of the vaccine. When the body temperature is above 38°C (100.4°F), the person has a fever.

FIRST AID STEPS

1. Advise the person to **rest and dress lightly**.
2. **Offer the person fluids** to drink to replace lost fluids from sweating.
3. In many cases, medication is not necessary. If the person is feeling unwell, you can control their fever by **giving them the recommended dose of paracetamol** (or acetaminophen). You can also **sponge the person with lukewarm water**, as long as this does not upset them.
4. **Monitor** the person's condition and be aware of any additional signs and symptoms that occur. If fever lasts for more than 3 days, seek medical help.



Sometimes, **aches and pain** can happen and be considered as an adverse effect of the vaccine. In this case, you will only have to ease the pain by **putting ice** on it or **giving them** the recommended dose of **paracetamol** (or acetaminophen)

For more information contact us on: First.aid@ifrc.org

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