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ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR

COVID-19 VACCINE?



As the national COVID-19 vaccine rollout picks up speed, many of us wait in anticipation for that 'call' to receive our shots. If you, like many others, are curious about what to expect, Professor Dr James Koh Kwee Choy joins us to answer a few frequently asked questions along the way.



BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

Prof James recommends wearing **loose clothing** on the day of your appointment, so that the doctor or nurse can easily access your shoulder.

You must also bring your phone (with your MySejahtera ID) and your MyKad.

Prof James adds that there is no requirement to eat or fast before going for the vaccine. However, it may be wise to eat something before you go, as the whole process could take around 2 hours in total.

AT THE VACCINATION CENTRE

You'll still need to follow the SOP. Prof James shares that you will need to wear your face mask, have your temperature checked, sanitize your hands, check-in your location on the MySejahtera app, and adhere to social distancing protocol.

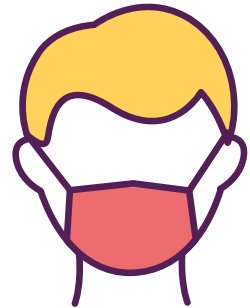
You'll go for a check-up before getting your vaccine. After getting your identity verified, you will attend a briefing and a 10-minute counselling session with a doctor on site.

During this session, the doctor will take your medical history and you'll be given a chance to ask any questions that you might have regarding the vaccine.

Once the doctor has deemed you fit for the vaccine, you'll be given a consent form to sign. After signing, you can proceed to receive your shot.

"The injection itself was very fast and painless; just a very small prick that you don't really feel at all," Prof James reassures us.

There will be a time allocated for post-vaccination observation. Right after getting vaccinated, you will be placed in a monitoring room for 30 minutes. There, you will be observed for signs of adverse reactions.

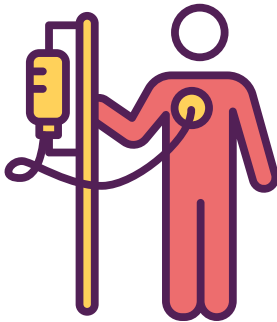




THE SECOND DOSE

You will receive a notification to get your second vaccination dose a few weeks after your first jab. Prof James says that the second dose will go by much quicker, as there will be no counselling or briefing sessions.

After the second dose, you will be given a card to verify that you have received both doses. This card will also be available in your MySejahtera app.



SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT SIDE EFFECTS?

Prof James states that although side-effects are common and symptoms may vary, **severe reactions to the vaccine are very rare.**

Common side-effects include pain and swelling at the injection site, tiredness, chills, and feeling feverish—these symptoms usually go away after a few days.

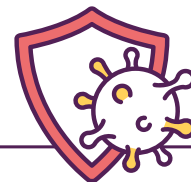
Sharing his experience, he says, “The effects were more pronounced for me with the second dose.”

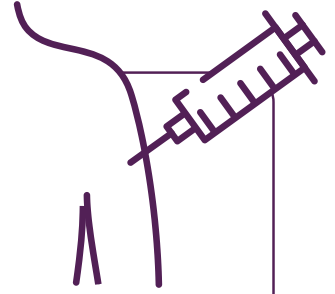
If you experience these side-effects, Prof James advises that you can take paracetamol to relieve the pain. However, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are **not recommended** for use to alleviate vaccine side-effects.

SHOULD PEOPLE THAT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN INFECTED BY COVID-19 STILL GET VACCINATED?

Yes, they should still register for the vaccination.

“In Malaysia, a 3-month gap between recovery from COVID-19 and vaccination is practised,” Prof James says.





ARE THERE ANY PROS AND CONS BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT BRANDS OF COVID-19 VACCINES?

Different brands of vaccines may work differently, but Prof James claims that all vaccines approved by the Ministry of Health are safe and effective.

SHOULD WE WAIT FIRST, OR GET THE VACCINE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE?

Some people may want to wait and see before getting the vaccine. However, this may put the community in more danger.

“Herd immunity needs to happen as quickly as possible as the virus will mutate. The faster we are able to vaccinate people, the less time the virus will have to mutate in the community,” Prof James says.

