

Spring Garden Medical Clinic

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Do's and Don't's for your Covid Vaccination

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Do's

- **Drink a lot of water:** Staying hydrated is extremely important both before and after your vaccination. The most common side effects of vaccines include muscle pain, fatigue, headache, and fever. Being properly hydrated will not only prevent you from feeling sick but may also help to shorten the duration and intensity of side effects.
- **Get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep:** When you get vaccinated, the body relies on immune responses to develop protection. It is recommended that recently vaccinated people sleep for at least 7-8 hours as sleep deprivation can result in suppressed immunity since the body rebuilds its defence mechanisms during sleep. Not getting enough sleep can also trigger stress, which further suppresses the immune system.
- **Do some light exercise/physical activity:** Listen to your body. Exercise supports blood circulation that can help in reducing vaccine side effects. It is recommended to do something less strenuous in comparison to your regular exercise routine. For example, going for a light walk.
- **Consult your doctor before the vaccination if you are on steroids or blood thinners:** People on steroids and blood thinners can stop their medications for two days

before and two days after the jab to prevent adverse side-effects. If someone has had an anaphylactic shock to a vaccine, they should inform their physician and be more careful.

- **Apply a clean, cool, and wet cloth** (or some ice) over the arm after the vaccination to reduce the pain. One can also do mild exercise or use the arm for light activities to further lessen the pain and discomfort.
- **Vaccinated lactating mothers should continue breastfeeding.** The antibodies produced through COVID-19 vaccination could pass to the babies through milk and it may also offer immunity to the baby like other vaccines given in pregnancy do. Pregnant women can also take the vaccine, as approved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare India and WHO
- **Continue with COVID-19 appropriate behaviour:** The most important thing to do post-vaccination is to continue wearing masks, regularly washing, or sanitizing your hands, maintaining physical distance, avoid crowded places and avoid touching surfaces.

Don'ts

- **Avoid alcohol and tobacco:** Although there are no approved scientific studies that quantify the effect of alcohol or smoking on vaccination, it is advisable to avoid tobacco or alcohol consumption as it may aggravate and worsen vaccine side effects making the experience more stressful and unpleasant. Alcohol also affects the body's immune system negatively and there is a chance that the immune response to the vaccine may not be as effective if there is excessive alcohol in the system. The same goes for tobacco consumption as well.
- **Do not delay consulting a doctor if you experience COVID-19 symptoms even after vaccination:** Remember that the vaccination takes a while to kick in, and you will develop immunity only a couple of weeks after the second dose. The side effects such as pain and discomfort in the arm or fatigue usually

subsides within a few days. Consult your physician if there are severe side effects or the symptoms do not subside.

- **Avoid strenuous physical activity for at least 2-3 days post vaccination:** As your body needs time to recover from the side effects of the vaccine, avoid putting it in stress.
- **Do not miss other necessary vaccines:** Some other adult vaccines may be unavoidable and should not be missed out in case of COVID-19 vaccination. However, it is advisable to keep a gap of at least 28 days between COVID-19 vaccine and other necessary vaccine(s). If the schedule cannot be modified, then a different site (arm or thigh) should be used for other vaccine(s). Consult your doctor before scheduling your vaccines.
- **Do not think that you are completely immune to COVID-19 after vaccination:** No vaccine has a 100 percent success rate. You may contract COVID-19 even after being vaccinated but chances are the infection would be much milder. The vaccine only protects you from hospitalisation, death, and serious disease. You can still be an asymptomatic carrier and it is important that you continue to follow COVID-19 appropriate behaviour such as use of masks, hand sanitizers or hand washing, and follow physical distancing.

Source: [UNICEF \(https://www.unicef.org/india/stories/covid-19-dos-and-donts-after-vaccination\)](https://www.unicef.org/india/stories/covid-19-dos-and-donts-after-vaccination)