Vaccine development and approval in Canada

Vaccine development

Scientists develop a potential vaccine
Scientists conduct lab and animal studies before testing on humans

10s of volunteers

Phase I
- Is the vaccine safe?
- What is a safe dose?
- Are there any side effects?

100s of volunteers

Phase II
- How well does the vaccine work?
- Is it safe on a larger number of people?
- Safest and most effective dose?

1000s of volunteers

Phase III
- Does the vaccine prevent disease?
- What are the side effects?

Manufacturer submits application to Health Canada for review

Review and approval of vaccines

Teams of Health Canada experts conduct a thorough and independent review of all vaccine data *

Health Canada approves a vaccine if it is safe, it works, it meets manufacturing standards, and the benefits outweigh the risks

Governments coordinate the purchase, logistics and distribution of vaccines across Canada

All Canadians have access to the vaccine

Continuous monitoring and review to confirm the safety of the vaccine, and that benefits outweigh risks

* For COVID-19 vaccines, Health Canada is using a fast-tracked process that allows manufacturers to submit data as it becomes available, and for Health Canada experts to start the review process right away. Vaccines will only be authorized once we have all necessary evidence.