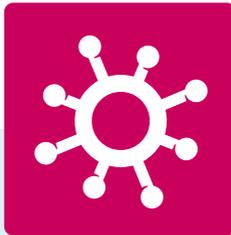




COVID-19 in the Netherlands

How is the Netherlands dealing with COVID-19?



COVID-19 advice

The government advises the following:

- Wash your hands frequently. Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- 1.5 metres is a safe distance to prevent infection. Don't shake hands.
- Make sure the room you are in is well ventilated with fresh air.
- If you have cold/flu symptoms such as a sore throat, cough or fever, stay home and do a self-test, even if you've been vaccinated.
- Wear a face mask in crowded places to protect yourself and others.

If you have specific questions about your own circumstances or medical situation, discuss them with a doctor.



Get vaccinated

It's important to be aware that COVID-19 is still present in the Netherlands. People are still getting sick from the virus. COVID-19 is extremely contagious. You should therefore get vaccinated against COVID-19, even if you're completely healthy.

Everyone aged 5 years and over can get vaccinated against COVID-19, including people from other countries, such as refugees, international employees and migrant workers. If you live in the Netherlands and you're registered in the Register of Persons (BRP), or if you don't live in the Netherlands but you're staying here for longer than a month, you can get a free COVID-19 vaccination.

You can get vaccinated even if you don't have a citizen service number (BSN) or ID number.

Protect yourself and your family

In the Netherlands, almost 90% of people have been vaccinated against COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccine protects you personally, as well as your family and other people you come in contact with. Once you've been vaccinated, it's less likely that you will become seriously ill or have to go to hospital because of COVID-19. The more people who get vaccinated, the harder it is for COVID-19 to spread.

In the Netherlands, people get the primary course (usually two doses), followed by a booster dose three months after the second dose or after a COVID-19 infection.

The booster helps to maintain a high level of protection against COVID-19. To ensure a good level of long-term protection, from mid-September 2022 everyone aged 12 years or above can get a booster COVID-19 vaccination (or a second booster). Even if you've already had COVID-19, it's a good idea to get vaccinated or get a booster.

Where can you get vaccinated?

In the Netherlands, you can get a free COVID-19 vaccination at a Municipal Health Service vaccination centre. You can make an appointment, but you don't have to. You can get vaccinated even if you're from another country.

- No appointment: Visit www.prikkenzonderafpraak.nl to find a vaccination location near you. This website has been translated into 13 languages.
- To make an appointment by telephone: call 0800 7070 (in Dutch or English). Interpreters are available to help you make an appointment.
- To make an appointment online: go to www.coronavaccinatie-afpraak.nl.

How does the vaccine work?

The vaccine stimulates your body to create antibodies against the virus. If you later come into contact with the coronavirus (the virus that causes COVID-19), these antibodies will ensure you are well protected. This reduces the chance of the virus making you seriously ill.

Side effects

After your vaccination, you may experience mild side effects. That's normal after a vaccination. The side effects may include pain at the injection site, headache, fatigue, muscle pain or fever. They usually last for 1 to 3 days. You can take paracetamol to alleviate the side effects. The likelihood of serious side effects after a vaccination is extremely low. If you have any questions or concerns, call your doctor.

Useful to know

- In the Netherlands, COVID-19 vaccinations are always free.
- It's up to you whether to get vaccinated or not.
- You can get vaccinated even if you don't have a citizen service number (BSN) or ID number.
- Your information will never be shared with other people without your permission.
- In the Netherlands, the vaccine we prefer to use is an mRNA vaccine (BioNTech/Pfizer or Moderna).
- As an alternative, you can also get the Janssen or Novavax vaccine.
- When you get your COVID-19 vaccination, you must complete a health declaration. This is available in multiple languages from the Municipal Health Service.
- If you're pregnant, it's safe for you to have a COVID-19 vaccination. The vaccine is not harmful for you or your unborn child. In fact, doctors recommend that you get vaccinated. Research shows that you have a higher risk of becoming seriously ill if you get COVID-19 while pregnant.
- Hold off on your vaccination plans or reschedule your appointment if you're sick or have a fever on the day of your vaccination.

For more information in English about COVID-19 vaccinations:

www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/dutch-vaccination-programme



COVID-19 testing

If you have COVID-19-like symptoms such as a runny nose, sneezing, a cough, a sore throat, tightness in your chest or a fever, stay home and do a self-test. This will help prevent the spread of the virus. You can buy self-tests from a chemist's shop, pharmacy or supermarket. Some municipal councils give out free self-tests.

Test result

If you test positive for COVID-19: stay home for at least five days and avoid contact with other people as much as you can, even if they've been vaccinated. After five days, you can go out again once you've been symptom-free for 24 hours. If your symptoms don't go away, you can go out again 10 days after your symptoms started. After 10 days, you are no longer infectious. Tell the people you've seen over the past few days that you have COVID-19, so they can get tested to see if they are infected too.

For more information in English about testing and what to do if you test positive: www.government.nl/topics/c/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-test.

If the result of your self-test is negative, you are allowed to go out again. If you continue to have symptoms, even if they're mild, do another self-test the next day. You might still have COVID-19, even if the result is negative.



If you have questions about COVID-19:

- www.coronavaccinatie.nl (in Dutch)
- www.mijnvraagovercorona.nl
- www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19 (in het Engels)
- www.pharos.nl/coronavirus (in various languages)
- corona.steffie.nl (in various languages)
- www.refugeehelp.com/get-help/category/health-care (in English, Ukrainian and Russian)