

# COVID-19 Vaccination After Lymph Node Removal

## Am I More Likely To Get COVID-19?

Since your lymph node removal surgery, you may wonder if you are more likely to get the COVID-19 infection than others. With about 800 lymph nodes in your body, your immune system still works just as well as it did before your surgery.

If you have lymphedema (swelling related to lymph node removal), you will be more likely to get skin infections in the area you had surgery. This is not the same as general infections like influenza, a cold or COVID-19.

## Should I Get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Allina Health recommends that you get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you had lymph node removal surgery.

## What are the Risks of the COVID-19 Vaccine?

The risk for lymphadenopathy (swelling of the lymph nodes) occurs in a small number of people. Even if you get this side effect, it doesn't mean you will get lymphedema.

Allina Health recommends that you avoid getting the injection on the side that had lymph node removal to be safe.

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If you had lymph nodes removed in both axillae, ask to have the injection in your thigh. If you can't, get the injection in the arm that had the least number of lymph nodes removed.

## **Whom to Contact for Lymphedema**

If you get new or worsening lymphedema after you receive the COVID-19 vaccine:

- contact your oncology provider
- see a lymphedema therapist in the cancer rehabilitation program.



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