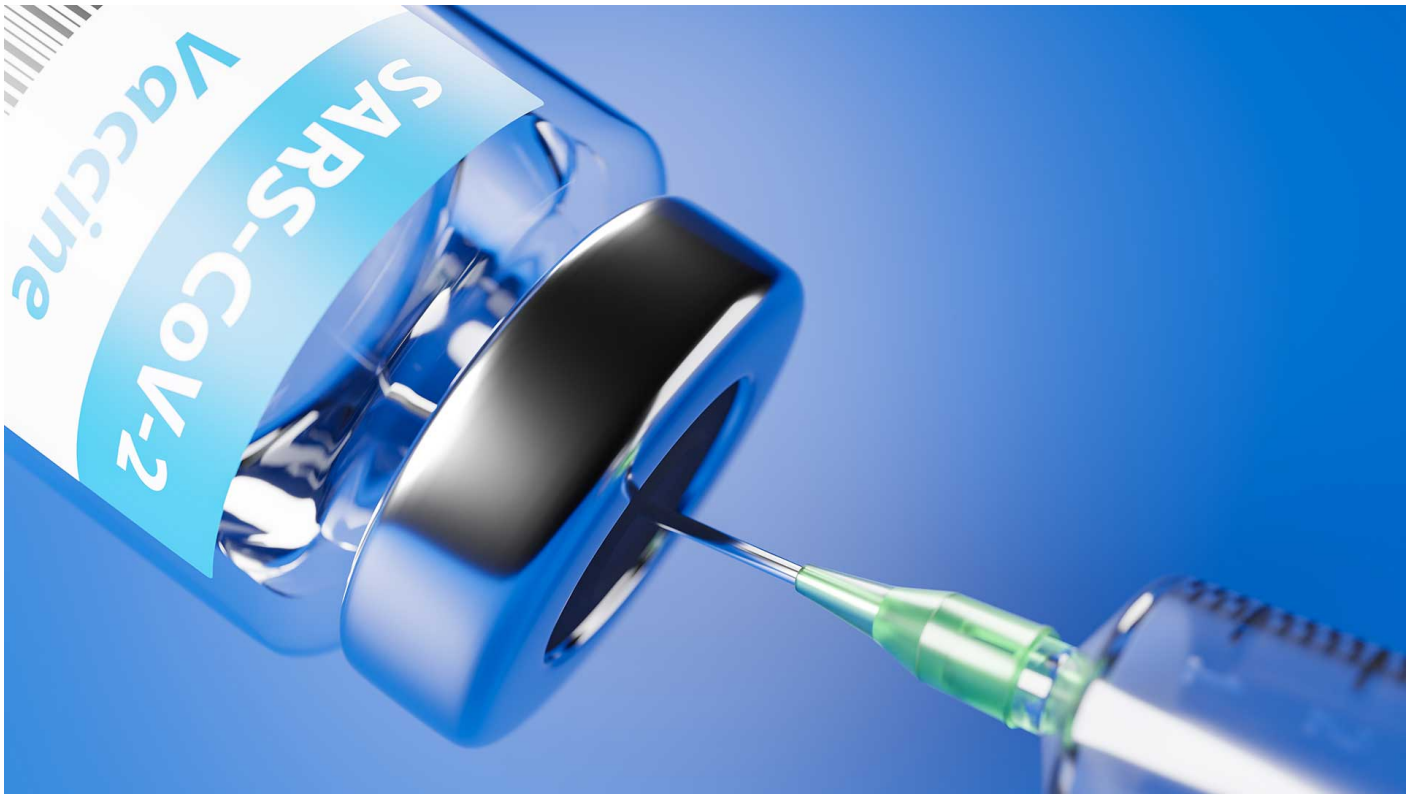


# COVID-19 vaccines in Mexico: Should I get vaccinated? Is it safe?



With additional information from Asael Villanueva and José Torres

**How do COVID-19 vaccines work? Are they safe? If I get vaccinated, will I no longer get sick or infect others? When can I get vaccinated?**

Dr. Michel Martínez, head of the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit and leader of the COVID-19 Program at [TecSalud](#), the health system of [Tec de Monterrey](#), answers these and other questions.

Check out this practical information with **everything you need to know about COVID-19 vaccines** in Mexico:

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  - Is it safe to get vaccinated?
  - Which vaccine should I get?
- [What is getting vaccinated like? Will getting vaccinated make me completely immune?](#)
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  - Vaccination for those over 50
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**Yes. It's strongly recommended and important that you do.** By getting vaccinated, you can protect yourself and your family and help end the pandemic.

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*“There’s more benefit in vaccinating all of us than in herd immunity (when most people get infected). That’s a large risk. In addition, it may take 2 to 3 years, and in the meantime, a stronger and more aggressive strain may appear.”*

- Is it safe to get vaccinated?

**Yes.** Tests have shown the safety of vaccines that are already authorized, and there have been very few cases of side effects, as with any medication, explains Dr. Martínez.

He claims that vaccination has generally been a very good thing for humanity and has driven life expectancy in Mexico to rise from 40 to 50 years of age in the 1950s to more than 75 today.

*“If there’s one tool humans have that has prolonged life expectancy, it’s immunization (with vaccines),”* Martínez added.

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Dr. Martínez clearly says that the important thing is **to get vaccinated with whichever vaccine is available to us** in the official vaccination scheme.

*“People ask me, ‘Which vaccine should I get?’ I tell them to get the one you’re given, the one they offer you,”* he says.

Currently (January 18), in Mexico there are 2 vaccines authorized by COFEPRIS for emergency use: the [Pfizer - BioNTech](#) vaccine (which is already being administered) and the [AstraZeneca](#) vaccine.

The government has reported that they’re also contemplating others, if validated, such as the Russian **Sputnik V** and the Chinese **CanSino** Biologics vaccines.

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The CanSino vaccine is a single dose.

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*"We can safely say that what people will have is functional immunity. It's too soon to know about sterilizing immunity,"* the doctor explains.

"It won't protect you 100%. That's clear to us. However, it's going to make the illness much milder and quicker."

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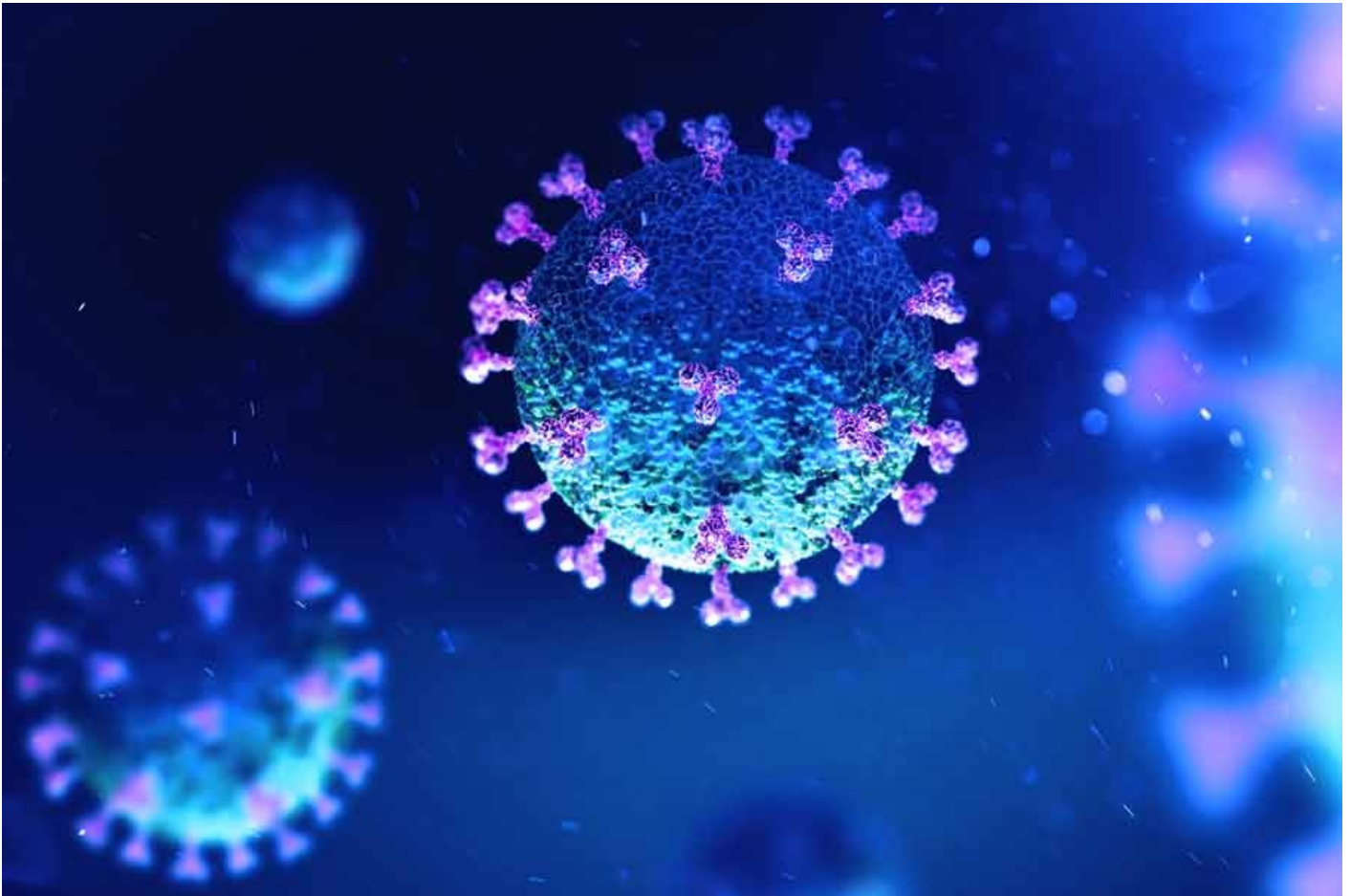
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- Should I continue to wear a face mask? Will I no longer transmit the virus once I'm vaccinated? The answer is yes, you need to continue to wear a face mask and maintain social distancing. And yes, you could still transmit the virus.

For the functional immunity reasons mentioned above, it will be necessary to keep up measures in order to not get infected and not infect others even after getting vaccinated.

*"It may be that a vaccinated person still transmits the virus to others who aren't vaccinated, so you should continue to wear a face mask,"* the doctor explains.

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How does the vaccine work? What does it do in my body? - How does the vaccine work in my body?

*“A vaccine is a biological product that causes patients to generate immunity against a disease by stimulating the generation of antibodies.*

*“These are immune system proteins that recognize and neutralize foreign substances such as viruses, bacteria, or toxins,” Dr. Martínez explains.*

In the case of the COVID-19 vaccines, there are two main methods that are the most commonly used:

- **Messenger RNA vaccines:** Unlike traditional vaccines, an attenuated or inactive virus isn't injected, but rather protein information is transmitted into our system to teach our cells how to produce the protein (the “spike protein”) that lives on the surface of the virus and helps it attach to our cells. Since the body has already produced the protein and has developed antibodies against it, when the virus enters our system, it's rejected and cannot latch on.
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Messenger RNA vaccines are considered very innovative and are predicted to be useful for other diseases, including cancer.



In the words of the dean of TecSalud, Guillermo Torre, they're "***one of the most important biotechnological advances of this century.***"

**"This type of vaccine is one of the most important biotechnological advances of this century."**

- How long will the effect of the vaccine last?

The effect is expected to be long lasting, says Dr. Martínez, although there are still no studies to show this because the vaccines are very new.

So far, **8-month immunity has been documented**, for example, but the effect is estimated to last much longer.

However, it's possible that in the future, people vaccinated will need to get vaccinated again, whether to extend the immunity effect or to adapt to new variants of the virus.



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Which are the main vaccines and what are their characteristics? - Messenger RNA or mRNA:

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The main and most advanced vaccines are:

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- Non-replicating adenovirus vectors:

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The vaccination plan, which will be free and universal for the Mexican population, has been divided into stages according to population groups.

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The Mexican government has determined that, for now, pregnant women and children won't be vaccinated until there's more evidence on their use in this population.

Myths and questions about vaccination

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This is false, and it's just one of the conspiracy theories that's been circulated on the Internet.

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Although the process has been quicker than any before due to the situation and emergency authorizations from the authorities, the vaccines have complied with the phases that need to be carried out.

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Dr. Martínez says that according to tests, vaccines work against B.1.1.7, the **new variant of SARS-COV-2**, originally reported in Europe that has already spread to America and Mexico.

It's common for viruses to have certain variations, he explained, but added that laboratories have indicated that so far current vaccines also cover this new strain.

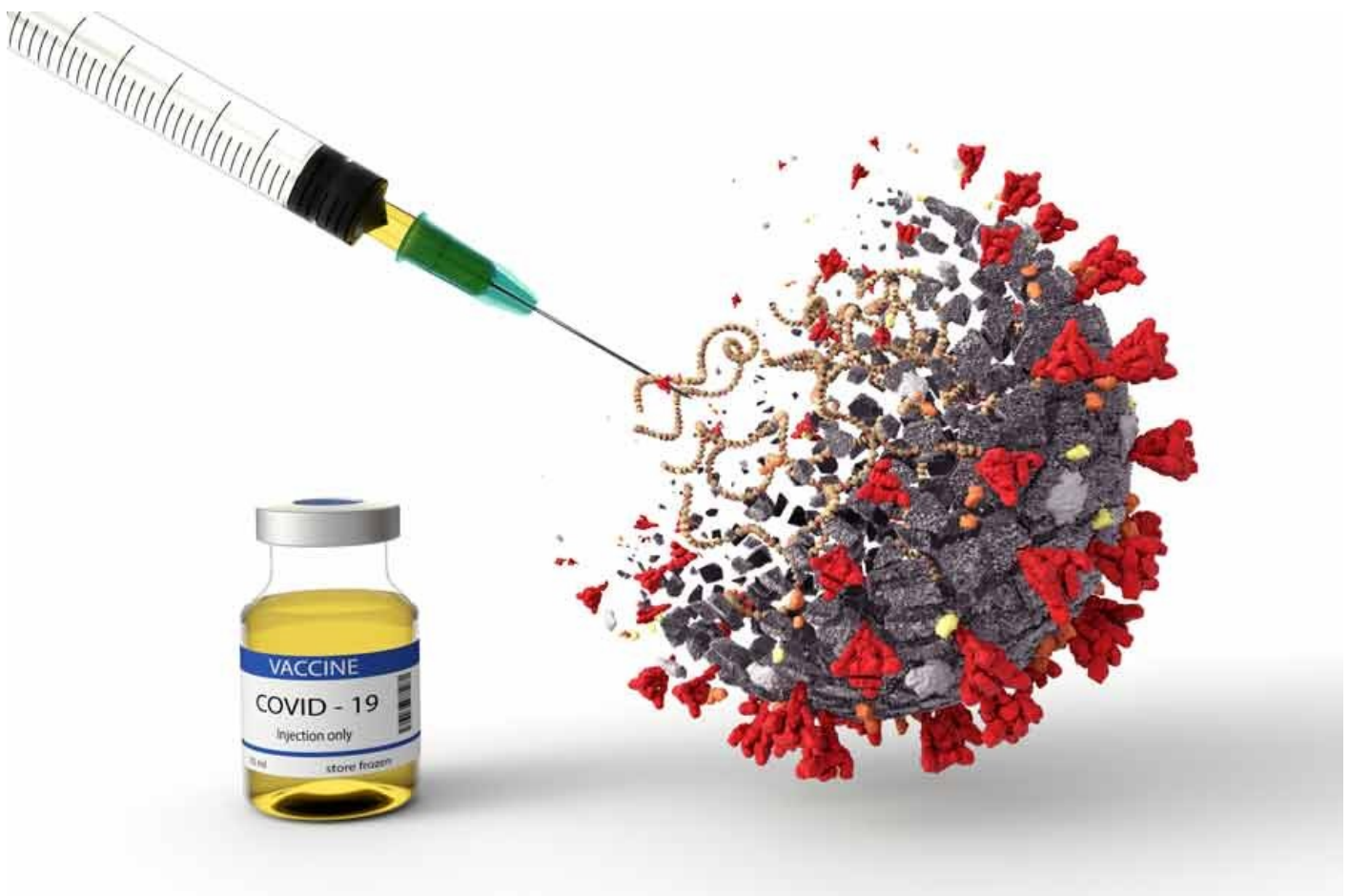
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<https://tec.mx/en/news/national/health/tecsalud-begin-testing-german-vaccine-against-covid-19-mexico>

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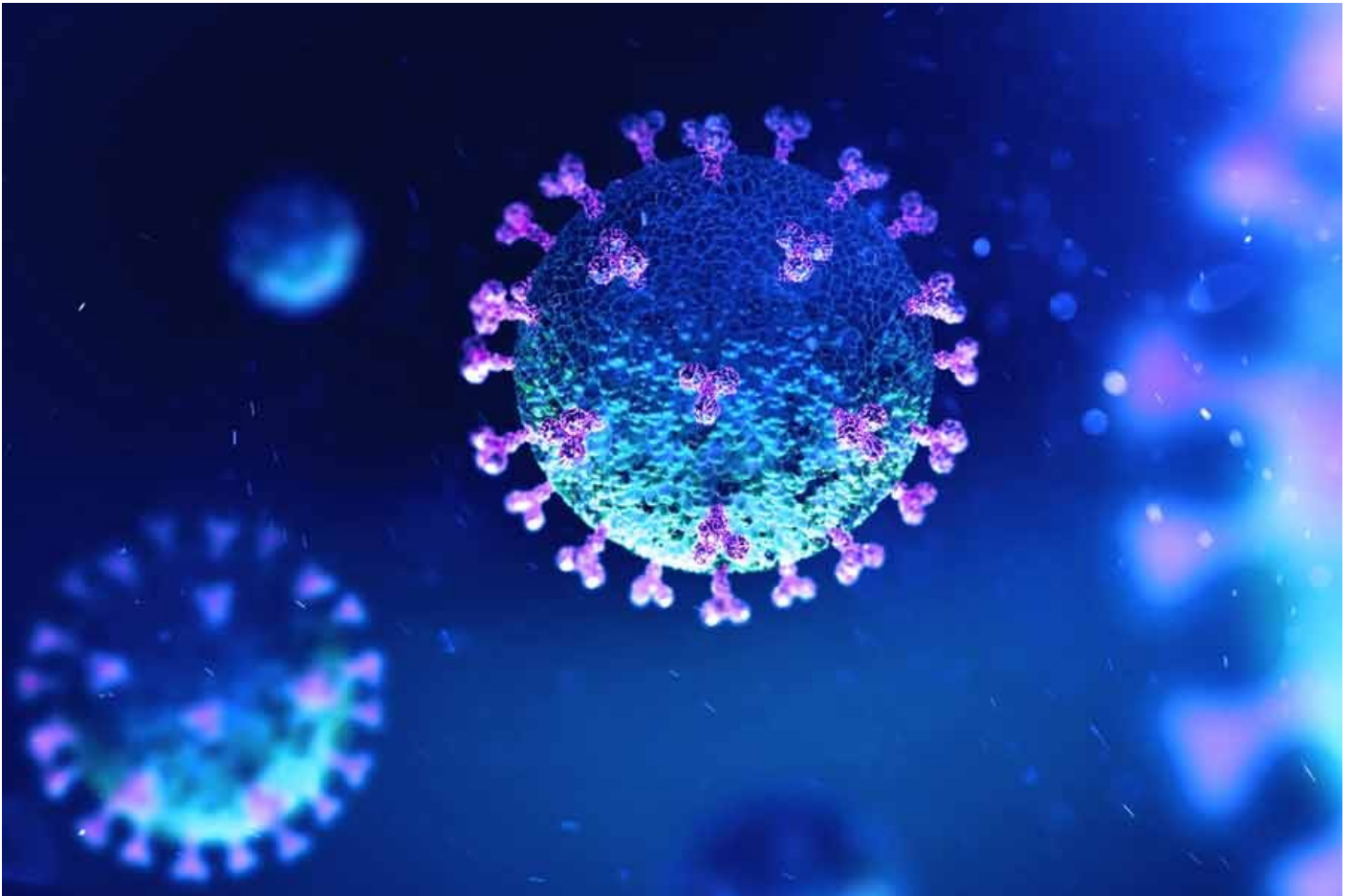
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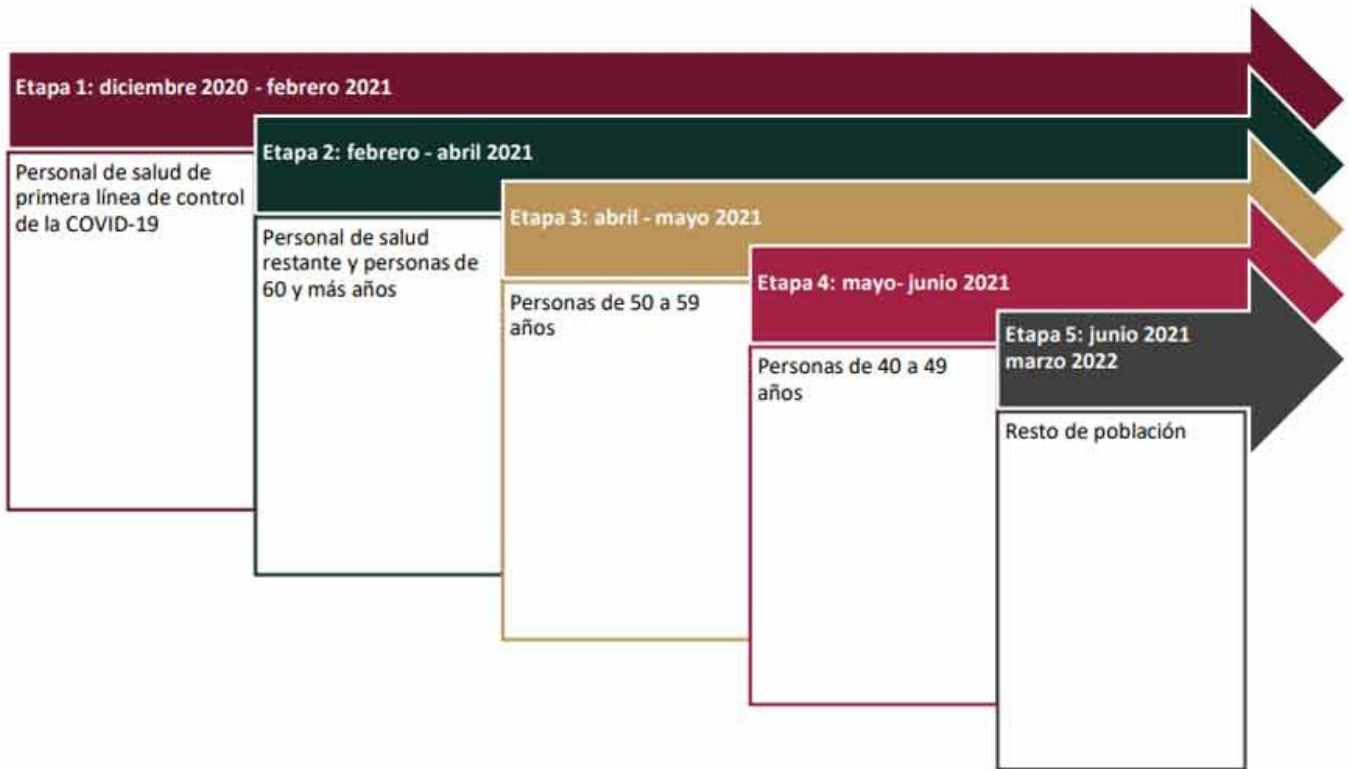
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