

COVID-19 VACCINATION

FAQ



We have prepared this FAQ to answer questions you may have about COVID-19 vaccination. All information is taken from the website of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

DEVELOPMENT

Q. The COVID-19 vaccines were developed in under one year, which is very fast. Does that mean they were not properly tested for safety?

A. No. The COVID-19 vaccines passed the Food and Drug Administration's gold standard test for safety: a randomized, placebo-controlled Phase 3 clinical trial. Vaccines that do not work properly and/or pose significant risk of side effects or dangerous reactions are not approved for use by the FDA.

Q. So how were the COVID-19 vaccines developed so quickly?

- A. There are three reasons why the COVID-19 vaccines were able to be developed so quickly:
1. The COVID-19 virus is a member of the coronavirus family, which includes SARS, MERS, and four viruses that cause the common cold. Scientists have been studying coronaviruses for over 50 years, which means the COVID-19 vaccine developers already knew a lot and were not starting from scratch last year.
 2. Given the global threat posed by COVID-19, scientists from around the world cooperated to fast-track vaccine development.
 3. The US and other governments invested large sums of money in COVID-19 research and vaccine development.

Q. How many vaccines are there?

A. Currently, three vaccines are authorized and recommended for emergency use in the United States:

- Pfizer-BioNTech
- Moderna
- Johnson & Johnson/Janssen

[This CDC page](#) provides more information about each vaccine.

Q. How much does it cost to get vaccinated?

A. The federal government is supplying COVID-19 vaccines free of charge to all people living in the United States.

SAFETY

Q. Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

A. Yes! These vaccines have passed intensive safety testing, and millions of people have been vaccinated with no ill effects.

[This CDC page](#) provides more information about vaccine safety.

Q. Will the vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

A. No. None of the vaccines approved for use in the United States were developed with the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means the vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Q. Will I have COVID-19 symptoms after getting the vaccine?

A. You may briefly experience mild COVID-19 symptoms after getting vaccinated. This is normal. The vaccine “teaches” your immune system to recognize and fight the COVID-19 virus. Any symptoms you experience are a sign that your body is building protection against the virus.

Q. I had COVID-19 and was treated with either monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma. Should I get vaccinated?

A. You should wait 90 days from the date of your treatment before getting vaccinated. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatment you received or if you have more questions about getting vaccinated.

Q. Should I get vaccinated if I have an underlying health condition?

A. You should plan to get vaccinated unless you have had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to ingredients in the vaccine. Speak to your doctor if this applies to you.

Q. Should women get vaccinated if they are pregnant or trying to become pregnant?

A. Yes, there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy or fertility. Speak to your doctor if you have questions.

Q. Will the vaccine alter my DNA?

A. No, the vaccines do not change your DNA in any way.

EFFECTIVENESS

Q. Do the COVID-19 vaccines work?

A. Yes! Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines “teach” the immune system how to recognize and fight the COVID-19 virus by producing COVID-19 antibodies.

[This CDC page](#) provides more information about vaccine effectiveness.

Q. I’m not a member of a group that is at high risk for developing severe COVID-19 symptoms. Should I get vaccinated?

A. Yes! There are two reasons why:

1. While many people who get sick with COVID-19 experience only mild symptoms, they may transmit the disease to vulnerable individuals who become severely ill and/or suffer long-term health effects. Getting vaccinated helps stop the ongoing transmission of COVID-19.
2. Even if you have no underlying health conditions and aren’t a member of a high-risk population, there is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. Why take a risk when you can get vaccinated and be protected?

Q. Can I still get sick with COVID-19 after I have been vaccinated?

A. If you are exposed to the virus just before or just after getting vaccinated, you could become sick. This is because it typically takes a few weeks from the date of vaccination to build immunity.

Keep in mind that no vaccine offers 100 percent protection. However, individuals who receive the COVID-19 vaccine are far less likely to become seriously ill even if they do get sick with COVID-19.

Q. If I got sick with COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

A. Yes, you should get vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19. It is possible (although rare) to be reinfected with COVID-19. Reinfection appears to be uncommon in the 90 days after the first infection, but experts do not yet know how long post-infection natural immunity lasts.

Q. How long does the protection offered by the COVID-19 vaccine last?

A. We do not yet know how long vaccines protect against COVID-19. Scientists are working to learn more about both natural- and vaccine-induced immunity, and the CDC will keep the public informed when new evidence becomes available.

Q. Can I carry and transmit the virus to others even if I have been vaccinated?

A. Scientists aren't sure. Currently, the CDC recommends that vaccinated individuals continue to wear a mask and observe social distancing while in public or around unvaccinated individuals.

Q. Will I test positive for COVID-19 after getting vaccinated?

A. No. This is because none of the vaccines approved for use in the United States were developed with the live virus that causes COVID-19.

After getting vaccinated, you may test positive on some COVID-19 antibody tests. This shows that your body has produced the COVID-19 antibodies that protect against infection.

GETTING VACCINATED

Q. How is the COVID-19 vaccine administered?

A. The COVID-19 vaccines are all administered by intravenous injection.

| | Number of Doses | Time Between Doses |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Pfizer-BioNTech | 2 | 21 days (3 weeks) |
| Moderna | 2 | 28 days (1 month) |
| Johnson & Johnson | 1 | --- |

Q. If I get the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine, can I get the second dose early?

A. No.

Q. Can I delay the second dose if necessary?

A. Yes, your second dose may be given up to 42 days (6 weeks) after the first dose. However, you should try to get your second dose as close to the 3-week or 1-month schedule as possible.

Q. Am I protected against COVID-19 after receiving the first Pfizer/Moderna shot?

A. The Pfizer/Moderna vaccines provide some protection with a single shot, but they do not become fully effective until approximately two weeks after the second shot.

Q. Should I get the second Pfizer/Moderna shot even if I experience symptoms from the first shot?

A. Yes. Any symptoms you experience are temporary and are evidence that your body is building immunity against COVID-19.

Q. Is it safe to receive other vaccinations along with the COVID-19 vaccination?

A. Scientists aren't sure yet. Currently, the CDC recommends waiting at least 14 days after receiving your COVID-19 vaccination before getting any other vaccine, including a flu or shingles shot. If you get any other vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccination.

Q. What should I do on the day I am scheduled to be vaccinated?

A. When you get to the vaccination site, be sure to wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth and maintain 6 feet of distance from other people.

Q. What information will I receive after my vaccination?

A. You will be given a vaccination card or printout that tells you what vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where the vaccine was administered. You should also receive a printed fact sheet (or link to an electronic version) that provides more information about the specific vaccine you received.

Be sure to keep any vaccination information you receive for future reference.

AVAILABILITY

Q. When can I get vaccinated?

A. Supplies of the vaccines are greatly increasing, so you should be able to get vaccinated soon. In many states, you may be able to be vaccinated right now if you are over 50 or have a serious health condition.

In some states, the vaccine is or soon will be available to **all** individuals over 16. Use the interactive map [on this website](#) to see if your state has announced a date when all adults will be eligible for vaccination. Finally, keep in mind that President Biden has declared that the vaccine will be available to **all** US adults by May 1.

[This CDC page](#) contains a tool to help you learn more about your state's COVID-19 vaccination plan. You can also check with your local health department or drug store to determine when you will be eligible to be vaccinated.