



# Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19

## VACCINE SAFETY

### Why should I get vaccinated for COVID-19?

COVID-19 can cause serious illness or even death. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you, putting their lives at risk. A COVID-19 vaccine greatly reduces the risk that you will develop COVID-19. In clinical trials, COVID-19 vaccines have been highly effective at preventing severe cases of COVID-19 that require hospital care or cause death.

### Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Yes! COVID-19 vaccines being used in the United States meet FDA's rigorous standards for safety and effectiveness. Millions of COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered in the United States since December 14, 2020, and all COVID vaccines being used here will continue to be monitored for safety.

### How can COVID-19 vaccines be safe since they were developed so fast?

Safe COVID vaccines were developed quickly through use of a century of vaccine experience; technology that was new to vaccines but had been studied for two decades; a prototype coronavirus vaccine already in development at NIH; and tens of thousands of volunteers for clinical trials that enabled rapid accumulation of data on safety and effectiveness. Simultaneous vaccine production and analysis of testing data also allowed vaccines to be shipped within days of FDA authorization.

### Will the shot hurt or make me sick?

No. Some people might get sore muscles, feel tired, or have mild fever after getting the vaccine, but most people report only a sore arm where they got the shot. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will go away on their own in a few days. If you have any concerns, call your doctor or nurse.

### Why are people having allergic reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine?

A few people have had allergic reactions called anaphylaxis after getting a COVID-19 vaccine but were treated and have recovered. Your doctor can help you decide if it is safe for you to be vaccinated.



## **Can the vaccine give me COVID-19?**

You cannot get COVID-19 from any of the COVID-19 vaccines in use or being tested in the United States because none of them contains the live virus that causes the disease.

## **Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?**

Yes. People who want to get pregnant in the future can receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Experts believe that COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a risk to a person trying to become pregnant in the short or long term.

## **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people who are pregnant?**

Yes. If you are pregnant, you may choose to be vaccinated when it's available to you. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta.

People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them. There is no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines. There is no routine recommendation for taking a pregnancy test before you get a COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have questions about getting vaccinated, talking with a healthcare provider may help you make an informed decision.

## **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people with certain underlying medical conditions?**

COVID-19 vaccines may be administered to most people with underlying medical conditions once vaccine is available to them. If you have questions about getting COVID-19 vaccine, you should talk to your healthcare providers for advice. Inform your vaccination provider about all your allergies and health conditions.

## **VACCINE EFFECTIVENESS**

### **How do COVID-19 vaccines work?**

Vaccines train our immune system to recognize the COVID virus and make cells to fight the virus. With vaccines, we can build immunity to a disease without getting the disease.

### **How long do COVID-19 vaccines last?**

We don't know right now how long COVID-19 vaccines protect people, but clinical trials are investigating this. What we do know is that among people who were vaccinated in clinical trials of the vaccines now available, the vaccines were highly effective at preventing severe cases of COVID that required hospital care or caused death. In these trials, vaccines were up to 94% effective in protecting volunteers from getting COVID-19 at all compared to people who received a placebo.

### **Do I need to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?**

Yes. Scientists do not yet know how long natural antibodies in people who have had COVID-19 will protect them from being re-infected.

### **Will the COVID-19 vaccine prevent me from infecting others?**

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the likelihood that you will develop and be able to spread COVID-19. A growing body of evidence shows that the risk of vaccinated people getting and spreading the virus to others is low, but ongoing studies are further analyzing this question.

### **Do the vaccines work on the new COVID variants?**

Scientists continue to study different forms, or variants, of the virus that causes COVID-19 to see if the vaccines will work against them. Current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines authorized and recommended for use in the United States offer protection against most variants. For this reason, COVID-19 vaccines are an essential tool to protect people against COVID-19, including illness caused by the new variants. CDC will continue to monitor the impact these new variants may have on how well the vaccines work.

## **VACCINE AVAILABILITY**

### **When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The vaccines are available now and as supply increases, more people will be able to receive a vaccine.

### **How much will the COVID-19 vaccine cost?**

The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States.

### **Do I need to wear a mask after getting the vaccine?**

After you've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you should keep taking precautions in public places like wearing a mask, staying 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces until we know more. We're still learning how vaccines will affect the spread of COVID-19.

If you've been fully vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask when:

- You gather indoors with fully vaccinated people
- You gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

You do need to wear a mask in public places, when visiting people from multiple households, or when around anyone with an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.