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COVID-19 VACCINE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For Essential Workers in Agriculture

COVID-19 vaccines can't make you sick with COVID-19.

None of the COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States contains the live virus that causes COVID-19. So a COVID-19 vaccine [can't make you sick with COVID-19](#).



The COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective.

All available COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19, including from the Delta variant.

Remember, to get the most protection from the vaccines, you need all the recommended doses:

- The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines require two initial doses.
- Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine requires one initial dose.

If you meet the criteria for having a [compromised immune system](#), you should get a third dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine at least 4 weeks after your second dose.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine booster?

COVID-19 vaccines continue to work very well at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

But protection against infection appears to decrease over time.

A booster shot is an extra dose that helps keep up protection.

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You're eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot if:

- You're at least age 18;
- It's been at least 6 months since you got the second dose of a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine; AND
- You're at [increased risk for getting and spreading COVID because of your job in food, agriculture, or manufacturing.](#)

COVID variants and why you should be concerned.

When viruses multiply, small changes (mutations) in their genes create variants. As long as the COVID virus is able to spread from person to person, it will have opportunities to mutate and become more dangerous.

CDC is tracking several COVID variants in the United States. The Delta variant is the most contagious yet and is responsible for most new COVID-19 infections.

Infections, hospitalizations, and deaths due to COVID-19 are increasing again in the United States—almost exclusively among people who are unvaccinated.

The available COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19, including from the Delta variant.

Why you should get vaccinated even if you can still get infected with COVID-19.

It's important to understand that infection doesn't necessarily lead to illness. If you're fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the virus manages to enter your body and begins to multiply—that is, infect you—your immune system will be prepared to quickly recognize the virus and keep it from doing real damage. That's why most people who get infected with COVID-19 despite being vaccinated—so-called breakthrough cases—have no symptoms (asymptomatic) or only mild-to-moderate illness.

Nearly everyone in the United States who is getting severely ill, needing hospitalization, and dying from COVID-19 is unvaccinated.

CDC recommends you get vaccinated as soon as you can.

The COVID-19 vaccines help prevent you from infecting others.

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the likelihood that you'll develop and be able to spread COVID-19. In rare occasions, some vaccinated people can get COVID-19 from the highly contagious Delta variant and spread it to others. Importantly, only a very small amount of spread happening around the country comes from vaccinated individuals.



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COVID-19 vaccines have been developed rapidly because of advances in technology.

The U.S. government has also invested millions of dollars to accelerate vaccine development. The same standards required to develop other vaccines have been followed [to ensure safety and effectiveness](#).

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is not considered a public charge.

COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and treatment is not considered as part of a [public charge inadmissibility determination](#). It won't negatively affect a person's, or their family's, immigration process.

You should get a COVID-19 vaccine if you're trying to become pregnant.

If you're trying to [become pregnant now or want to get pregnant](#) in the future, CDC recommends you get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. The COVID-19 vaccine triggers your immune system to produce antibodies that protect you from the virus that causes COVID-19. Growing evidence confirms that the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective for people who are pregnant. And there is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

Once you're fully vaccinated.

If you're [fully vaccinated](#), you can participate in many of the activities that you did before the pandemic. To maximize protection from the highly contagious Delta variant and to prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask inside public places if you're in an [area of substantial or high spread of COVID-19](#).

If you're not yet vaccinated, you should continue to:

- Wear a mask when inside public places.
- Keep at least 6 feet apart from people who don't live with you and who may not be vaccinated.
- Avoid crowds.
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated people must still follow federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial laws, rules, and regulations. That includes public transportation, airport/airplane, local business, and workplace guidance.



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Do people with compromised immune systems need extra doses of a COVID-19 vaccine?

People with compromised immune systems are less able to fight infections. If any of the following apply to you, you may not be fully protected from COVID-19 even if you've received two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech's or Moderna's mRNA COVID-19 vaccine:

- You have a [moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency disorder](#), such as DiGeorge syndrome or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome.
- You have an advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- You've ever had an organ transplant or had a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years.
- You're being treated with corticosteroids or other immunosuppressant medicines for such conditions as arthritis, asthma, or an autoimmune disease, such as lupus, sarcoidosis, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and psoriasis.
- You're being treated for cancer.

To get the most benefit from the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, [people with compromised immune systems should get a third dose](#). Wait at least 4 weeks after you get your second dose to get your third dose. An FDA and CDC review of data for Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine will determine whether a second dose is appropriate for people with compromised immune systems.

You should also continue to follow current COVID-19 prevention measures until your health care provider says it's safe for you to stop:

- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth around people you don't live with and when inside public places.
- Stay at least 6 feet apart from people you don't live with.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water aren't available.

Depending on where you are and what you do, your job can require you to prove that you got vaccinated.

The [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act](#) (HIPAA), and with certain exceptions, other [federal laws](#), can't stop your employer from asking you to prove you've been vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to work. But your state might limit what employers can ask you, so check with your state government's website to see what's allowed as a condition of employment.



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SAFETY IS THE TOP PRIORITY

The FDA and CDC have the highest standards when it comes to ensuring the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. Their process includes the following procedures:

- Scientists must first test vaccines extensively in medical studies to ensure they are safe and effective.
- Before the FDA authorizes a vaccine for use among the public, it ensures its safety by independently:
 - Reviewing the data from the medical studies, and
 - Inspecting the manufacturing facilities.
- Even after a vaccine has been authorized, the FDA and CDC closely monitor vaccine administration to identify even rare side effects or reactions.
- The FDA and CDC closely review any reports of side effects or reactions and share these facts with the public.
- The extremely rare cases of blood clotting and Guillain-Barré Syndrome following Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine and heart inflammation following Pfizer-BioNTech's and Moderna's vaccines—a very small number of cases out of millions of vaccinations—show that the FDA and CDC's vaccine safety monitoring systems work and catch even the rarest reactions.

Thorough investigations have confirmed that all three FDA-authorized vaccines are safe and effective. Medical experts stress that the benefits of receiving any of the COVID-19 vaccines in use in the United States far outweigh any potential risks.

The monitoring systems ensure that doctors are notified to watch for signs of serious reactions, no matter how rare, and are aware of proper courses of treatment.