



COVID-19 Vaccine Q&A

1. Will enough COVID-19 vaccine be available for everyone who wants it?

- a. Limited vaccines may be available, but the COVID-19 vaccine supply is expected to increase substantially in 2021 and eventually be available for everyone who wants to receive it.

2. Will there be a cost for the vaccine?

- a. It is anticipated the vaccine will be provided at no cost. In some cases, a provider may charge a small fee to you or your health insurance for the administration of the vaccine.

3. What is an mRNA vaccine and how does it work?

- a. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA, or mRNA, to trigger the immune system to produce protective antibodies against COVID-19 without using actual bits (live attenuated) of the virus like vaccines for other viruses e.g. flu shot. This is a newer approach to protect against infectious disease. The CDC says mRNA vaccines have been around for years and are found to be safe.

4. Will the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines alter my DNA?

- a. No. While the mRNA vaccines are the first of their kind, they cannot alter DNA. The mRNA vaccines work by introducing a messenger RNA molecule into your body, which causes cells to produce a protein that resembles one of the viral proteins that make up SARS-CoV-2. Your immune system recognizes the viral protein and generates an immune response against it.
- b. The mRNA vaccines are unable to change your genetic makeup because the mRNA injected into the tissue to stimulate an immune response does not

integrate into the cell nucleus of its recipients, thus genetic modification is not possible. Injecting RNA does not alter the DNA sequence of a human body. It only presents the body with the instructions to build a protein, which builds immunity.

5. What are the differences between the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines?

- a. They are both mRNA vaccines with superior efficacy, both require two doses and both have been authorized for emergency use. There are slight differences and are NOT interchangeable. You will not be able to select the vaccine, the one available is the one you'll be able to get. See below for a comparison:

| | Pfizer | Moderna |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Target Population | 16 and older | 18 and older Note: have begun testing in 12-17 year-olds |
| Vaccine Efficacy | 95% preventing symptomatic COVID infection and reducing the risk of severe disease, starting 7 days from the 2 nd dose. Equally protective across age groups, racial and ethnic groups. No data on asymptomatic infections. | 94.1% effective preventing symptomatic COVID infection and reducing the risk of severe disease, starting 14 days from the 2 nd dose. Slightly less effective in people 65 and older but equally protective across racial and ethnic groups. No data on asymptomatic infections. |
| Number of doses | 2 doses, 21 days apart | 2 doses, 28 days apart |
| Side effects | Injection site pain, fatigue, headaches, muscle/joint pain and more common after the 2 nd dose and in younger adults. | Injection site pain, fatigue, headaches, muscle/joint pain and more common after the 2 nd dose and in younger adults. |
| Pregnancy | The Covid 19 vaccine is available to pregnant women. Pregnant women should have a conversation with their healthcare provider to discuss the risk of Covid in pregnancy, individual risks for severe disease, and data on vaccine safety and efficacy in pregnancy. | The Covid 19 vaccine is available to pregnant women. Pregnant women should have a conversation with their healthcare provider to discuss the risk of Covid in pregnancy, individual risks for severe disease, and data on vaccine safety and efficacy in pregnancy. |

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|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Storage requirements | Shipping: -94 Fahrenheit Storage: must be used within 5 days after thawing | Shipping: -4 Fahrenheit (regular refrigerator freezer) Storage: must be used within 30 days after thawing and stable at room temperature for 12 hours |
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6. How many doses will be needed?

- a. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, as well as the Moderna vaccine, require two doses. The vaccine will be given three or four weeks apart, depending on the vaccine being used.

7. What are common side effects of the vaccine?

- a. Early indications are that mild to moderate flu-like side effects might occur, lasting up to 48 hours. This is your body creating a response to the vaccine and is normal.
- b. The symptoms from the trials appear to start soon after administration of the dose and persist for 36-48 hours.
- c. Common side effects from vaccination include pain, swelling or redness where the shot was given, a mild fever, chills, fatigue, headache, and muscle and joint aches. These side effects were also noted in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials. Early results from the first COVID-19 vaccines tested in people showed it worked as intended with no serious side effects.

8. What should I do if I experience side effects after receiving the vaccine?

- a. If your symptoms are unusual compared to the timing of the dose, or lasts more than three days, you should contact your primary care physician right away.

9. Will the COVID-19 vaccine be prioritized to certain groups?

- a. Due to initial limited supplies of the vaccine, doses may be limited to certain priority groups such as health care workers, residents of long term care and assisted living, and those who work in industries where social distancing is

difficult. As more vaccines become available, these groups will broaden so more people are eligible to receive the vaccine.

10. How effective is the vaccine?

- a. The two leading candidates, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, have been shown to be about 95% effective, which is very good.

11. How long will immunity from the COVID-19 vaccine last?

- a. It is not yet known how long immunity from COVID-19 infection lasts. The duration of immunity from COVID-19 vaccines are currently being evaluated. Data from clinical trials will be used to determine how long immunity will last and if it will be necessary for people to receive a booster dose of vaccine each year. Additional information will be forthcoming as vaccine studies continue.

12. Do you gain some immunity to the virus after the first vaccination or only after the second vaccination?

- a. We believe you gain some immunity after the first dose. Full immunity is achieved approximately seven days after the second dose, according to the clinical studies.

13. Does immunity after getting COVID-19 last longer than protection from COVID-19 vaccines?

- a. The protection someone gains from having an infection (called natural immunity) varies depending on the disease, and it varies from person to person. Since this virus is new, it is unknown how long natural immunity might last. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long. It is also currently unknown how long immunity from the vaccine will last. Additional information about the duration of immunity will be forthcoming.

14. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have allergies or a history of allergic reactions?

People who have had a severe allergic reaction to any ingredient in the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine should not receive the vaccine. Severe allergic reactions to any vaccine are very rare. As a precaution, but not a contraindication, people with a history of immediate allergic reaction to any other vaccine or injectable therapy should consult with an allergist or immunologist before receiving an mRNA vaccine. All participants will be carefully screened before the vaccine is administered and monitored for a minimum of 15 minutes following the vaccine.

15. How long after receiving the vaccine should you watch for negative reactions?

- a. Individuals, without serious underlying health issues, should be observed for 15 minutes following the vaccination.

16. Is COVID-19 vaccine being studied in children?

- a. Recently, one manufacturer has begun to include children in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials. Studies will need to be conducted in children often done after the vaccine has been shown to work and be safe in healthy adults. It is likely before the vaccine is recommended, but these studies are when COVID-19 vaccine is first available that it will not be recommended for pregnant women or children

17. Can I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or planning to become pregnant?

The Covid 19 vaccine is available to pregnant women. Pregnant women should have a conversation with their healthcare provider to discuss the risk of Covid in pregnancy, individual risks for severe disease, and data on vaccine safety and efficacy in pregnancy.

18. Can I take Tylenol or Ibuprofen if I have a fever/headache/aches after the vaccine?

- a. Yes, you may take Tylenol or ibuprofen for these side effects of the vaccine if do not have health conditions prohibiting their use. Please check with your primary care provider if you have questions.

19. Can I get the vaccine if I have a high fever or am currently ill?

- a. If you are currently ill, with symptoms, you should wait on getting your vaccination until you have recovered.

20. Can I get the vaccine if I have already had COVID-19?

Yes. Vaccine should be offered to persons regardless of history of prior COVID infection. Persons with documented acute COVID-19 infection in the preceding 90 days may delay vaccination until near the end of this period, if desired. Data from clinical trials indicate that mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are safe in persons with evidence of a prior COVID infection. Vaccination of persons with known COVID-19 infection should be deferred until the person has recovered from the acute illness and criteria have been met for them to discontinue isolation.

21. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have had another non-COVID-19 vaccine recently?

- a. No, it is recommended to have 14 days between vaccinations.

22. What if I don't receive my second dose on time? (21 days for Pfizer or 28 days for Moderna)

- a. It is recommended that you receive it as soon as possible to the due date. A delayed second dose will not diminish your immunity.

23. Has the COVID-19 vaccine been rushed in comparison to other vaccines?

- a. Although the speed of the COVID-19 development is faster than typical, COVID-19 vaccines are still required to go through the proper testing and analysis to make sure they are safe—no step in the process has been skipped. However, the federal government is funding advance production of some of the more promising vaccines so at least a limited supply would be available quickly after Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval.

24. Can the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine give me COVID-19?

- a. These vaccines do not contain the virus, so they can't give you COVID-19. These vaccines contain genetic instructions that allow your own cells to make one of the virus proteins. Your immune system reacts to this protein to make antibodies and other immune cells that can recognize and fight COVID-19 if you do get exposed.

25. If I receive the COVID-19 vaccine, will I still need to wear a mask and follow safety guidelines in public?

- a. Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines will provide, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic, such as wearing masks, washing hands often, and social distancing. Experts need to understand more about the protection COVID-19 vaccines provide before deciding to change recommendations on mask use. Other factors, including how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities, will also affect this decision.
- b. You should continue to wear a face mask and follow all safety precautions (social distancing, frequent hand hygiene) while out in the community.

26. Will COVID-19 vaccine cause someone to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests?

- a. Vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States will not cause you to be ill with or test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection. If your body develops an immune response, which is the goal of vaccination, there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently working to assess how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

27. What is the COVID-19 Vaccine Record Card?

- a. This vaccination record card is to provide documentation for the patient to take with them following vaccination.

28. Will vaccine recipients be required to show their COVID-19 vaccination record card in order to get their second dose?

- a. No. However, all vaccine recipients should be encouraged to keep their card and show it at their follow-up vaccination appointment. Retaining the COVID-19 vaccination record card is important to ensure the second dose of vaccine is the same brand/manufacturer as the first dose received.

29. Expected timeline for vaccinating the general population?

- a. It depends on where you live, your personal health and your job. The general public is expected to get access to the vaccine by mid-2021 with the available Pfizer and Modern vaccines. That means if you are in one of the priority groups, you may be vaccinated before then. The CDC has recommended first doses go to health care workers and residents in long-term care facilities. The next round of vaccine shipments and supplies should be used for vaccinating essential/front-line workers (e.g. law enforcement, teachers) and people 75 years of age and older which should be possible by February 2021.

30. What about the new variant in the UK?

- a. There is a lot we don't know about this new variant but we do know:
 - i. Mutations and variants are not new, the Coronavirus has already mutated a number of times documented back to May and June.
 - ii. It looks to spread faster but there is no evidence yet that it is more deadly and no evidence that it is not susceptible to the vaccine.