

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do we know COVID-19 Vaccines Are Safe?

COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the FDA have been shown to be safe and effective in clinical trials. All COVID-19 vaccines were authorized only after it was found that they make it substantially less likely you'll get COVID-19. The authorized vaccines are **up to 95% effective** against a person becoming ill with COVID-19.

The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. Learn how the federal government is working to ensure the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, using both established and new safety monitoring systems. These vaccines cannot give you COVID-19.

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

**No.** A vaccine will not cause you to test positive on [viral tests](#). If your body develops an immune response (the goal of vaccination), there is a possibility that you may test positive on [antibody tests](#). Antibody tests indicate that you may have protection against the virus.

### I have allergies. Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

It depends. [CDC recommends](#) that:

- If you have had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction—even if it was not severe—to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna).

- If you have had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction to any ingredient in Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get the J&J/Janssen vaccine.
- If you had an immediate allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get the second dose.
- If you are allergic to PEG, you should not get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Ask your doctor if you can get the Janssen vaccine.
- If you are allergic to polysorbate, you should not get the Janssen vaccine. Ask your doctor if you can get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you aren't able to get one type of COVID-19 vaccine because you are allergic to an ingredient in that vaccine, ask your doctor if you should get a different type of COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you aren't able to get the second shot of an mRNA vaccine because you had an allergic reaction to the first shot, ask your doctor if you should get a different type of COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you have had a severe allergic reaction to other vaccines or injections, you should ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine.
- People with a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injections may still get vaccinated. People may get vaccinated even with a:
  - History of allergies to oral medications
  - Family history of severe allergic reactions
  - Milder allergy to vaccines

## **If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?**

**Yes.** The [CDC recommends](#):

- If you tested positive, had only mild symptoms, and were not treated for the coronavirus, you should wait at least 10 days since the start of COVID-19 symptoms **and** satisfy [criteria](#) to discontinue isolation before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Wait 90 days to get the vaccine if you recovered from a COVID-19 infection and were treated with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma.

## **Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?**

**Yes.** COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for people with underlying health problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity. You should consult with your primary care physician if you have additional concerns.

## **Is it better to get natural immunity to COVID-19 rather than immunity from a vaccine?**

**No.** While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection lasts. Vaccination is the best protection, and it is safe. People who get COVID-19 can have serious illnesses, and some have debilitating symptoms that persist for months.

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

There may be side effects, but they should go away within a few days. Possible side effects include a sore arm, headache, fever, or body aches. This does not mean you have COVID-19. Side effects are signs that the vaccine is working to build immunity. If they don't go away in a week, or you have more serious symptoms, call your doctor.

## **Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as another vaccine?**

Wait at least **14 days** before getting any other vaccine, including a flu or shingles vaccine, if you get your COVID-19 vaccine first. And if you get another vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccine.

If a COVID-19 vaccine is inadvertently given within 14 days of another vaccine, you do **not** need to restart the COVID-19 vaccine series; you should still complete the series on schedule. When more data are available on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines administered simultaneously with other vaccines, CDC may update this recommendation.

## **Why do I need two COVID-19 shots?**

Currently authorized vaccines, and most vaccines under development, require two doses of vaccine. The first shot helps the immune system recognize the virus and gets your body ready, and the second shot strengthens the immune response to make sure you have full protection. For the vaccines currently approved in the U.S., you need both to get the best protection. You **should not** get the second dose earlier than the recommended interval.

## **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for children?**

Currently, COVID-19 vaccines are not recommended for children:

- Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is for ages sixteen and above
- Moderna vaccine is for ages eighteen and above
- Johnson & Johnson vaccine is for ages eighteen and above

Clinical trials are ongoing to identify a safe vaccine for children.

## **If someone was given a first dose of vaccine that does not meet the most up to date vaccine eligibility criteria, should they receive a second?**

Individuals who have already received their 1st dose of COVID-19 vaccine should receive their 2nd dose at the recommended interval for that vaccine.

## Are family member caregivers of regional center consumers eligible as healthcare providers for Phase 1A?

Yes, family member caregivers with direct risk of COVID-19 exposure who care for regional center consumers at high risk of COVID-19 complications and related fatalities including the following conditions: cerebral palsy, down syndrome, epilepsy, and individuals who have specialized health care needs, including dependence upon ventilators, oxygen, and other technology are eligible. This does not include other family members within the same household who do not provide direct care to the regional center consumer. Eligible family members must obtain documentation from their regional centers, verifying the qualifying condition of the family member cared for and caregiver status.

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- If a COVID-19 vaccine is inadvertently given within 14 days of another vaccine, you do not need to restart the COVID-19 vaccine series; you should still complete the series on schedule. When more data are available on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines administered simultaneously with other vaccines, the CDC may update this recommendation.

## Can pregnant or breastfeeding women be vaccinated against COVID-19?

- Yes. The CDC recommends that 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 also 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, talk with a healthcare provider to help you make an informed decision.

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

- Nothing. COVID-19 vaccines, including their administration, are free. Read more at the Department of Managed Health Care's [Know Your Health Care Rights](#)