

COVID-19 VACCINES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated Sept. 29, 2021

SAFETY/SIDE EFFECTS

What are benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

Source: Mayo Clinic

- If you get COVID-19, you could become very sick. Some people die. A vaccine keeps you from getting very sick.
- If you get COVID-19, you might give it to people around you.

Is the vaccine safe?

Source: Public Health Communications Collaborative

The vaccine has been tested in thousands of people with strict rules. It has been safe so far. Scientists are watching for reactions.

Wasn't the vaccine made too fast?

Source: Johns Hopkins University & Medicine Coronavirus Resource Center

It usually takes several years for a vaccine to be ready to give to large groups of people. The COVID-19 vaccine is ready sooner because:

- Two stages of the trial were combined.
- Since so many people in community have COVID-19, it was easier to see if the vaccine helped those who received it.
- The U.S. government and others invested lots of money to produce vaccines while the trial was going on, so those that worked could be given sooner.

What kind of reaction will I have to the vaccine?

Source: Public Health Communications Collaborative

Most people don't have a reaction to the vaccine. If they do, it's minor, like a sore arm or being tired.

How long after I get vaccinated will I have a reaction?

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Allergic reactions and feelings of light-headedness and/or fainting typically happen within 15 minutes of vaccination. So you may be watched for 15 minutes after getting the shot. Side effects like sore arm, tiredness and headache usually happen one to three days after vaccination.

How much testing has there been on people of color?

Source: *Public Health Communications Collaborative and Ohio Department of Health*

The vaccine needs to be safe for all people who get it. The share of people of color in the trials done so far was close to the share of people of color in the whole United States.

Who can't get the vaccine?

Source: *American Academy of Family Physicians*

- Children and teens under age 12. No vaccines have yet been approved for people under 12.
- Anyone who has a fever or other symptoms should wait to get the vaccine until they feel better.
- People who have had a serious reaction to a shot in the past or know they are allergic to an ingredient in the vaccine.

SUPPLY/DEMAND

Besides getting the COVID-19 vaccine, what can I do to protect myself?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Do the following to protect yourself:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- Avoid crowds.
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wash your hands often.

If I've already had COVID-19 and gotten better, do I need vaccine?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Yes. Some people may need to wait 90 days after their illness to get a vaccine. Talk to your health care provider if you are unsure.

If I receive a first vaccine dose of a two-dose vaccine, will I be able to get the second dose?

Source: *Public Health Communications Collaborative*

Yes.

Will we need to get the vaccine yearly like the flu vaccine or just once?

Source: *Johns Hopkins Medicine*

Experts aren't sure yet.

HOW VACCINE WORKS

How will a COVID-19 vaccine work in my body?

Source: *Washington State Department of Health*

The COVID-19 vaccine teaches your immune system to recognize the coronavirus. When you get the vaccine, your immune system makes antibodies (“fighter cells”) that stay in your blood and protect you in case you are infected with the virus. You get protected against the disease without having to get sick.

When enough people in the community can fight off the coronavirus, it has nowhere to go. This means we can stop the spread quicker.

Do you have to have U.S. citizenship or permanent residency to receive the vaccine?

Source: *Kentucky Department for Public Health*

No, all vaccine sites are open to anyone within the priority groups regardless of country, state or county of residence.

COST

How much will the vaccine cost?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Vaccine doses bought with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. However, vaccination providers can charge an administration fee for giving someone the shot.

PREGNANCY, BREASTFEEDING AND FERTILITY

Can pregnant women get the vaccine?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Yes. Pregnant women with questions about the vaccine should talk to their health care provider.

Can breastfeeding women get the vaccine?

Source: *Tennessee Department of Health*

Yes. Breastfeeding women with questions about the vaccine should talk to their health care provider.

Does the COVID-19 vaccine cause infertility?

Source: *Washington State Department of Health*

No. This is a myth circulated online by non-scientific sources.

CHILDREN

Is it safe for kids and teenagers to get the COVID vaccines?

Source: *American Academy of Family Physicians*

Some brands of vaccines are available to teens age 16 to 18, but others are only for adults age 19 and older.

When will kids be able to get the vaccine?

Source: *American Academy of Pediatrics*

Trials with children are currently underway.

AFTER YOU'RE VACCINATED

Do I still need to wear a mask if I'm vaccinated?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Yes. Due to the large amount of COVID-19 in the community, experts recommend that vaccinated people wear a mask indoors when in large groups or with people who may not be vaccinated.

MISCELLANEOUS

Do I need to be vaccinated for work?

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

The federal government is requiring either the vaccine or a negative test each week for all people who work for companies with more than 100 employees.