

# COVID-19 VACCINE

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### ACCESS

#### How do I get a vaccine?

There are several places you can look for a vaccination provider. You can visit [VaccineFinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org) or check your state health department or local pharmacy's website. Visit [How Do I Get a COVID-19 Vaccine](#) to learn more.

#### Which vaccine is the better one?

The three COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) all reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 and severe COVID-19 illness and hospitalization. All three are safe and effective.

#### Any serious thought given to mandating vaccine for all teachers/child care professionals?

There are no federal vaccine mandates. No state has mandated vaccines for teacher and child care professionals; however each state has been directed to prioritize these professions when distributing vaccines.

#### When can children get the COVID vaccine?

The Pfizer vaccine has been approved for adults and adolescents who are 12 years old and up. Otherwise, there are no authorized COVID-19 vaccines for children. Currently, children have been enrolled in clinical trials for the authorized vaccines to test which dose is best for children.

### SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS

#### What are the ingredients in the COVID-19 Vaccines?

Vaccine ingredients can vary by manufacturer. To learn more about the ingredients in authorized COVID-19 vaccines, please visit the following websites, which are maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- [Information about the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Information about the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Information about the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

#### Will the COVID-19 vaccines that use mRNA change my genes or DNA?

No, COVID-19 vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. For example, the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are messenger RNA (mRNA vaccines), which teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way. Instead, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease. Learn more about how COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work.



### How will the vaccine protect against all of the different strains/variants?

We are still learning how effective the vaccines are against new variants of the virus that causes COVID-19. Early data show the vaccines may work against some variants but could be less effective against others. We are learning more each day about the characteristics of new variants. CDC will share updates as soon as they are available.

### Is it possible to contract COVID-19 from the vaccine?

None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

### Should I get a vaccine if I have already had COVID-19?

Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 or not. Experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although unlikely—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again. Learn more about why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection than getting infected.

### Is the vaccine safe for children/teenagers?

There are no authorized COVID-19 vaccines for children under the age of 16. Currently, children have been enrolled in clinical trials for the authorized vaccines to test which dose is best for children.

### When should I go to get vaccine after getting COVID?

If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait at least 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

### How long do the vaccines last? Will we have to re-vaccinate each year?

We do not know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and death for hundreds of thousands of individuals in the United States. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may become very ill. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice rather than becoming infected. Experts are working to learn more about both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity. The CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

## Can you still get COVID-19 after being vaccinated?

Yes, though it is unlikely. All authorized vaccines have high effectiveness rates. The COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19, but also reduce your risk of severe illness if you were to contract COVID-19 after receiving a vaccine.

## If I have an underlying health condition, can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

People with underlying medical conditions can receive a COVID-19 vaccine as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Learn more about vaccination considerations for people with underlying medical conditions. Vaccination is an important consideration for adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions because they are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

## Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant?

Yes, the data show that COVID-19 vaccines are safe for pregnant women and may help provide protection for their newborns. New research published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concluded that there were no safety concerns for women who receive the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines while pregnant. However, infection with COVID-19 is associated with adverse birth outcomes such as preterm birth.

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

If you are trying to become pregnant now or want to get pregnant in the future, you may receive a COVID-19 vaccine when one is available to you. There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy. In addition, there is no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines. Like all vaccines, scientists are studying COVID-19 vaccines carefully for side effects now and will continue to study them for many years. If you have additional questions, please contact your primary care provider.

## Are the vaccines experimental? Are they safe?

These COVID-19 vaccines have been through three rounds of clinical trials, a data safety review board and an application reviewed by expert scientists and physicians before being authorized by the FDA. This authorization means that they are safe.

Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines, and these vaccines will undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history. CDC, FDA, and other federal partners will continue to monitor the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND STAFF

### How will it affect COVID-19 protocols in child care programs if only part of the staff is willing to get the vaccine?

Even after child care providers and staff are vaccinated, there will be a need to continue prevention measures for the foreseeable future including wearing masks, physical distancing, and other important prevention strategies. There are still no authorized vaccines for children under the age of 12.

Studies show that vaccines are effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Getting a vaccine will also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.

### Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact if I am fully vaccinated?

Children under 12 are currently not eligible to be vaccinated, so child care staff should continue to wear masks and practice social distancing even if all the staff members have been vaccinated. The CDC recently updated guidelines for fully vaccinated people, however these do not apply to child care settings.

Outside of work, fully vaccinated people may gather indoors without physical distancing or wearing masks with:

- Other people who are fully vaccinated
- 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 should still avoid medium or large gatherings regardless of vaccination status. Additional recommendations can be found at [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated](#).

### Do teachers who are vaccinated need to quarantine if there is an exposure?

The CDC guidance for vaccinated individuals states that vaccinated individuals do not need to isolate after exposure, however, child care

programs should continue to follow CDC and local guidance about quarantine procedures for the child care settings.

### Is COVID-19 transmitted more easily in certain racial or ethnic groups?

No, COVID-19 transmission is not associated with race, ethnicity or country of origin. Transmission is associated with prolonged close contact with someone who has COVID-19 without masking. The risk for transmission is much lower if all people mask and stay at least 3-6 ft apart from others and get the vaccine as soon as they are eligible. Certain populations may have greater exposure and higher risk for transmission due to living conditions such as higher density housing or taking public transportation. The strategies to prevent COVID-19 transmission work for everyone and the vaccine works for people regardless of their race, ethnicity or country of origin. There are certain factors such as lack of access to health care that may lead increased severity of COVID-19 and some of these factors may be more common in certain populations. However, any person of any age, race, or ethnicity is at higher risk of getting COVID-19 if they are unmasked and spend time with someone who has COVID-19.

## ADMINISTRATIVE

### Will this webinar be available to watch at a later time?

The webinar can be accessed here.

### Will we receive a certificate afterwards?

At this time, no continuing education credits or certificates of completion credits are associated with COVID-19 webinars, but we do thank you for time and efforts.

**For additional vaccine resources, please visit: <https://www.childcareaware.org/coronavirus-hub/state-covid-19-vaccine-distribution-plans/>**

**To watch our vaccine webinar, visit: <https://info.childcareaware.org/covid-19-vaccine-webinar>**