



Covid-19 Vaccine

Frequently asked Questions



1. How are Pfizer and Moderna vaccine's different than other vaccines?

These two vaccines contain synthetic mRNA, which is genetic information used to make the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) spike protein. Because mRNA is highly unstable, these vaccines are made with a lipid nanoparticle that protects it from being destroyed prior to injection. The spike protein is the part of the virus that attaches to human cells. The spike protein alone cannot cause COVID-19. Once the spike protein is created, it causes the immune system to make antibodies against the virus. These antibodies can then provide protection if a person comes into contact with the virus. mRNA vaccines are non-infectious and do not enter the human cell nucleus, so the mRNA cannot be inserted into human DNA. Additionally, once the mRNA is injected into the arm, it is broken down rapidly, and this theoretically reduces the chances for long-term side effects. mRNA vaccines do not have the ability to cause cancer.

2. Can I get COVID-19 between the first and second shot?

According to the FDA, the Pfizer and BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine starts working within about two weeks of the first dose. While potential vaccines have very high protection rates against infection from COVID-19, it is possible that the vaccine will be ineffective for you. You will still need to wear a mask and practice good hand hygiene and social distancing following a vaccination.

3. If I take the vaccine, will I expose my family to COVID-19?

Information currently available about the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines indicates that these vaccines would not affect a person who is a close contact of a person taking the vaccine. It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it is possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick and infect others. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection. If you have COVID-19 symptoms after getting the vaccine or at any time, you should contact your health care provider and consider getting tested for COVID-19.

4. Do I need the vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?

At this time, vaccinations are not being given to people who have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days. Those who have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days should have natural immunity, and since there is limited supply of vaccine available, they should not receive the vaccine until they are beyond the 90-day window. Those who had COVID-19 more than 90 days ago should receive the vaccine.

5. How was the vaccine approved by the FDA?

The FDA authorized the vaccine under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) based on two months of safety data. According to the FDA, Pfizer must collect six months of safety data to apply for full approval. The EUA process has been deliberative, and the authorization wasn't rushed to meet any artificial deadlines. Plus, because the new coronavirus has surged so severely in recent weeks, we've seen a growing number of COVID-19 cases among placebo recipients? even as those who received the vaccine enjoyed robust protection. In that sense, the worsening of the pandemic has actually increased confidence that the vaccines are effective.

6. Is the vaccine made from a live virus?

The vaccines do not contain the full live SARS-CoV-2 virus and therefore cannot cause COVID-19. The only part of the virus they contain or make is spike protein. As such, there is NO risk of becoming infected with COVID because of the vaccine. The first vaccines that will be available will either contain mRNA (non-infectious genetic material), viral vectors, (modified versions of live viruses), or protein subunits (parts of viral proteins) which cannot cause infection.

7. What are the side effects of the shot?

The most common side effects were mild and included soreness at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, and fever. Side effects have been reported to be short-lived (most resolving in a day), mild, and to happen within the first few days of receiving the vaccine. Side effect occurrence typically is higher after the second dose of vaccine. Historically, long-term side effects from vaccines have been rare.

8. What guidance is there for women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant? What is the timeline for resuming pregnancy planning after receiving the vaccine? Will women be required to take a pregnancy tests? And what about breastfeeding?

At this time, the CDC does not recommend routine testing for pregnancy prior to receiving a Covid-19 Vaccine.

At this time, we have insufficient data to inform individuals about vaccine-associated risks in pregnancy or breastfeeding. These decisions should be considered in conjunction with the woman's health care provider, so that she can make an informed decision about whether or not to receive the vaccine. Considerations for vaccination include the level of COVID-19 community transmission, the woman's personal risk of contracting COVID-19, the risks of COVID-19 to her and potential risks to the baby, the efficacy of the vaccine, the known side effects of the vaccine, and the lack of data about the vaccine during pregnancy.

9. Why should I get Covid Vaccine if there is a 99% survival rate?

Surviving and thriving are incredibly different. Covid symptoms can persist for months! The virus causes damage to the lungs, heart, and brain

Heart: imaging tests taken months after recovery from covid-19 have shown lasting damage to the heart muscle - can increase risk of heart failure in the future

Lungs: The type of pneumonia often associated with Covid-19 can cause long-standing damage to the tiny air sacs in the lung—leads to long term breathing problems

Brain: Covid-19 infections can cause strokes, seizures, paralysis—increased risk of Parkinson's disease and Alzheimers disease