

# Get informed on COVID-19 vaccines

January 18, 2021

Recently, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued emergency use authorization (EUA) for coronavirus vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech<sup>1</sup> and Moderna<sup>2</sup>. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advisory committee also officially recommended the vaccines.

## **Will there be any out-of-pocket costs for the COVID-19 vaccine?**

No. The vaccine will have a \$0 cost share during the emergency health period.

## **Who will be first to get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

The first groups of people recommended by the CDC to be vaccinated are:

- Health care workers
- Residents of long-term care (LTC) facilities
- People 65 years and older
- People at higher risk due to underlying medical conditions

## **Will children also be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Each vaccine will have different age guidelines. Check with your health care provider for the most current guidance.

## **How do I find out when I can get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

State health departments decide when each group can get the vaccine.

## **Where can I get a vaccine once they are widely available to the public?**

You will be able to go to [vaccinefinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org) and choose COVID-19 from the vaccine list. Then, enter your ZIP code.

## **Do I have to go to an in-network pharmacy to get a vaccine?**

No. Once widely available to the public, you can get a COVID-19 vaccine at most pharmacies. You will not need a prescription to get a vaccine.

Check with your [state health department](#) to find out where to get it near you.

## **How many doses of the vaccine do I need?**

You need 2 doses of the Pfizer<sup>3</sup> COVID-19 vaccine. Get a second shot 3 weeks after your first to get the most protection.

Moderna<sup>4</sup> has a vaccine that will be 2 shots spaced 3-4 weeks apart.

## **Do I have to get 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine<sup>3,4</sup>?**

If you forget or choose not to get the second dose, the vaccine may be less effective. You may still have some protection with just one dose. You need to get 2 doses to make sure the vaccine will protect you as intended.

## **How effective is the vaccine?<sup>3,4</sup>**

Clinical trials for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines show at above a 90% effective rate.

## **Are there side effects?**

The CDC website, [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), is the best resource for COVID-19 information. Side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine could include pain at the injection site, fever, chills, headaches, muscle aches, and/or joint pain.

## **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe<sup>5</sup>?**

For FDA emergency use authorization, the known benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine must outweigh the known risks. The COVID-19 vaccines have been studied in large clinical trials where over 40,000 individuals received the vaccine. Most people experienced some pain at the site of the injection, and after the vaccination some people experience a short period of flu-like symptoms (fatigue, headache, fever). In addition to the FDA, a group of experts in vaccine safety have reviewed the data from clinical trials. The CDC will closely monitor the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine.

### Who should I contact if I have a problem or side effects after I get the vaccine?

If you have a severe reaction after the COVID-19 vaccine, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital. Call your vaccination provider or healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects that bother you or will not go away.

### Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have had severe allergic reactions to other vaccines?

Talk with your vaccination provider or healthcare provider about past reactions to vaccines.

### What is v-safe?<sup>6</sup>

V-safe is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell the CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. And v-safe will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one.

### How do I enroll in v-safe?<sup>6</sup>

When you get a COVID-19 vaccine, your healthcare provider will give you a v-safe information sheet. This sheet provides instructions on how to register and use v-safe. You must sign up within 42 days of getting your first COVID-19 vaccine dose.

### How long will the COVID-19 vaccine protect me?

At this time, it is not known how long the vaccine can protect you. Data is limited and research is ongoing.

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

The CDC recommends getting a COVID-19 vaccine even if you have been infected.

Health officials will keep the public informed with more details.

### If I get the vaccine, do I still need to wear a mask?

Yes. Experts are still learning about the protection the COVID-19 vaccine provides. So, you should keep following safety guidelines like washing your hands often, keeping a physical distance between you and others and wearing a mask.

### Should I get a flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are for different illnesses. A seasonal flu shot will not protect you from COVID-19. Getting both vaccines will help protect you the most.

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## Where can I go for more information?



Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) to learn more about side effects and tips for after you get the vaccine.

More resources:

- [FDA's Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Patient Fact Sheet](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Things You Need to Know](#)

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#### Endnotes

- 1 FDA Takes Key Action in Fight Against COVID-19 By Issuing Emergency Use Authorization for First COVID-19 Vaccine <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-key-action-fight-against-covid-19-issuing-emergency-use-authorization-first-covid-19>
- 2 FDA Takes Additional Action in Fight Against COVID-19 By Issuing Emergency Use Authorization for Second COVID-19 Vaccine <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-additional-action-fight-against-covid-19-issuing-emergency-use-authorization-second-covid>
- 3 Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/pfizer/index.html>
- 4 Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/moderna/index.html>
- 5 Ensuring the Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines in the United States <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html>
- 6 V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>



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