



COVID-19 Vaccines - Frequently Asked Questions

VACCINE BASICS



Why is it important to get vaccinated?

COVID-19 vaccines protect people from getting very sick from COVID-19 and ending up in the hospital or dying. They also reduce the risk of becoming chronically ill from COVID-19 (such as long-COVID), and from missing work and school.

In addition, getting vaccinated lowers the risk of giving COVID-19 to other people. This is especially helpful in protecting people at [higher risk of getting very sick](#).

It is recommended that people who've had COVID-19 in the past still get the vaccine to strengthen their immunity and to reduce their risk of getting hospitalized with COVID-19.

How well do the vaccines work?

The COVID-19 vaccines work very well at protecting against severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. Compared to people who are [up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccinations, unvaccinated people are [more likely to get COVID-19](#), much more likely to be [hospitalized with COVID-19](#), and much more likely to [die from COVID-19](#).

Like all vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines are not 100% effective at preventing infection. Some people who are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations will get sick with COVID-19. But if you stay up to date with your vaccinations and you do get infected, you are less likely to get sick and, if you do get sick, you are less likely to get severely ill or die. Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations reduces the chance of spreading the disease to others and increases your protection against new variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

As the science and the virus evolves, so do vaccine recommendations. Scientists and medical experts continue to closely watch for signs of decreased immunity in people of different ages and with different risk factors. They also look at how well the vaccines protect against new variants of the virus.

Which vaccines are available in the US?

Three COVID-19 vaccines are available in the US. They are made by Janssen/Johnson & Johnson (J&J), Pfizer-BioNTech (brand name Comirnaty), and Moderna (brand name Spikevax). The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are authorized for persons age 6 months and older. The J&J vaccine is only authorized for persons age 18+.

The CDC now recommends the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines over the J&J vaccine. Pfizer and Moderna are preferred for all vaccine doses because they offer better protection against COVID-19 than the J&J vaccine. In addition, the potential risks from the J&J vaccine, while rare, are greater than those with the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

The J&J vaccine is still available for:

- Those who can't get a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for medical reasons (such as severe allergic reaction to a vaccine ingredient).
- Those who prefer it despite the safety concerns. Learn more at [Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety](#).





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To learn more, visit the CDC [Stay Up to Date with Your COVID-19 Vaccines](#) webpage.

Where can I get more information?



- To print or view this FAQ or FAQs on other COVID-19 vaccine topics, scan the QR code or visit [COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#).
- [VaccinateLACounty.com](#) – including [COVID-19 Vaccine Schedules](#) with graphics to show when each dose is due and information on [How to Get Vaccinated](#).
- [Vaccines for COVID-19](#) CDC webpage.
- Ask your doctor if you have questions.

