

# Getting the Facts: Vaccine Awareness and Slowing the Spread

## Vaccines Are Here. What You Need to Know.

### How the COVID-19 vaccines work

- The COVID-19 vaccines help your body develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without you getting the virus.
- Different vaccines work in different ways, but all types of vaccines teach the body how to fight the virus in the future and build immunity.
- It can take a few weeks for your body to build immunity after getting a COVID-19 vaccine.
- It's possible that you could get COVID-19 just before or after being vaccinated, but it isn't possible to get COVID-19 from any of the vaccines being used or tested in the United States.

### Benefits of getting vaccinated

- COVID-19 can have serious, life-threatening complications, and there's no way to know how it will affect you. Getting vaccinated will help keep you from getting COVID-19.
- The vaccines are very effective in preventing COVID-related severe illness, hospitalization, and death even if you get COVID-19.
- Getting vaccinated may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with medical conditions.
- Getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others provide the best protection from COVID-19.



## Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

- Yes. Every COVID-19 vaccine authorized for use in the United States is [safe](#).
- Tens of millions of people nationwide have safely received COVID-19 vaccines. And these vaccines continue to undergo extensive safety monitoring.

## What are the possible side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?

- People who've been vaccinated commonly report [side effects](#)—normal signs that your body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- These side effects are mild and typically short-lived, lasting at most a few days. The most common side effect is a sore arm at the injection site. Other side effects include fever, feeling tired, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, and chills.
- If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, *after* you've been vaccinated.

## When Can I Receive a Vaccine?

- Vaccines are here now and everyone age 12 and older in the United States can get them.
- You have three ways to find vaccines near you:
  - Go to [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)
  - Text your ZIP code to 438829
  - Call 1-800-232-0233

## Key Points

- Vaccines are here now and everyone age 12 and older in the United States can get them. This is no time to let down your guard. Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available to us. The combination of getting vaccinated and following the CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others offers the best protection.
- The timing of the vaccines may vary, because each state has created its own regulations and distribution processes.
- Even if you've had COVID-19, experts still recommend that you get vaccinated, because we don't yet know how long natural antibodies last.
- If you currently have COVID-19, you should wait until after you recover and have left isolation to get vaccinated.
- The vaccines are free of charge to all people living in the United States, regardless of your immigration or health insurance status.
- CDC recommends that [people who have allergies not related to vaccines or injectable medications](#)—such as food, pet, or latex allergies—get vaccinated.

- If you've ever had a severe allergic reaction to any of [the ingredients in a COVID-19 vaccine](#), then do NOT take that particular vaccine.

## We Must Continue to Slow the Spread

Whether you choose to receive the vaccination, we must all continue to do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our health. Until you're fully vaccinated (2 weeks after your final dose), here's what we can do:

- [Wear a mask](#) that covers your nose and mouth when you're inside public places.
- [Stay at least 6 feet apart from people](#) who don't live with you and who may not be vaccinated.
- [Avoid crowds](#).



## Safety Is the Top Priority

The FDA and CDC have the highest standards when it comes to ensuring the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. Their process includes the following procedures:

- ✓ Scientists must first test vaccines extensively in medical studies to ensure they are safe and effective.
- ✓ Before the FDA authorizes a vaccine for use among the public, it ensures its safety by independently:
  - Reviewing the data from the medical studies, and
  - Inspecting the manufacturing facilities.
- ✓ Even after a vaccine has been authorized, the FDA and CDC closely monitor vaccine administration to identify even rare side effects or reactions.
- ✓ The FDA and CDC closely review any reports of side effects or reactions and share these facts with the public.

The extremely rare cases of blood clotting following Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine—just a small number of cases out of millions of vaccinations—show that the FDA and CDC's vaccine safety monitoring systems work and catch even the rarest of reactions.

A thorough investigation has confirmed that Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine is safe and effective.

And doctors have been notified and trained to understand the signs to watch for and the proper course of treatment if blood clots occur.