



Getting the Facts: Vaccine Awareness & Slowing the Spread

Vaccines are here. What you need to know.

How the COVID-19 vaccines work

- 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 or second vaccine in 2 dose series.
- It's possible that you could get COVID-19 just before or after being fully vaccinated, but it is not 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 is no way to know how it will affect you. Getting vaccinated will help keep you from getting COVID-19.
- Based on what we know, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do 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 COVID-19 vaccines safe?

- Yes. [The COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States meet FDA's rigorous standards](#) for safety and effectiveness.
- The FDA authorized the COVID-19 vaccines for the public only after tens of thousands of volunteers took them safely during medical studies.
- Since becoming available, tens of millions of people have safely received a vaccine.
- The COVID-19 vaccines continue to be closely monitored for safety and effectiveness.

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

- Most people don't experience any [side effects](#). But when they occur, they are usually mild and last at most a few days. Possible side effects include:
 - Soreness or swelling at the injection site
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Feeling tired
 - Headache
- These reactions are normal and mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed.
- If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter pain relief 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. Getting vaccinated and following the CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others provide the best protection from COVID-19.



- 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 no longer need to isolate to get vaccinated.
- Vaccines are free of charge to everyone in the United States, regardless of your immigration or health insurance status.
- CDC recommends that [people who have allergies that are unrelated 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 ingredient 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 or not, we must all continue to do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our health. Here's what we can do:

- [Wear a mask](#) that covers your nose and mouth.
- [Stay at least 6 feet apart from people](#) who you don't live with, in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- [Avoid crowds](#).
- Avoid poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- [Wash your hands often](#) with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water aren't available.



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.