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Together We Can Do This

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Yes. All available COVID-19 vaccines were shown to be safe and effective in medical studies. These studies involved tens of thousands of volunteers with diverse backgrounds, including American Indian and Alaska Native individuals.

Tens of millions of people in the United States have now received COVID-19 vaccines, and all COVID vaccines will continue to be monitored for safety.

Serious health effects from vaccines are very rare. It's highly unlikely that COVID-19 vaccines will cause long-term health problems. Also, there is no evidence at all that they will cause infertility or cancer.

Your risk for serious health problems is much lower from the vaccine than your risk if you're unvaccinated and get COVID-19. COVID-19 can leave you with heart and lung damage and other conditions that require long-term treatment. Vaccines are much safer paths to immunity than the disease itself.

How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines?

All available COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19. To get the most protection from the vaccines, you need all the recommended doses:

- 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine plus 1 booster when you're eligible.
- 1 dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine plus 1 booster when you're eligible.

You can get a 2nd booster 4 months after your 1st, if you're:

- 50 or older and got the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.
- 18 or older and got the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

CDC prefers that you get an mRNA vaccine and booster from either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna. See the latest guidance on boosters.

People with compromised immune systems are less able to fight infections and may need additional vaccine doses.

Why should I get vaccinated if I can still get infected with COVID-19?

It's important to understand that infection doesn't necessarily lead to illness. If you're fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the virus manages to enter your body and begins to multiply—that is, infect you—your immune system will be prepared to quickly recognize the virus and keep it from doing real damage. That's why most people who get infected with COVID-19 despite being vaccinated—so-called breakthrough cases—have no symptoms (asymptomatic) or only mild-to-moderate illness.

Nearly everyone in the United States who is getting severely ill, needing hospitalization, and dying from COVID-19 is unvaccinated. CDC recommends you get vaccinated as soon as you can.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States contains the live virus that causes COVID-19.This means that a COVID-19 vaccine can't make you sick with COVID-19. The different types of COVID-19 vaccines available do the same thing. They inform your immune system on how to recognize and fight the COVID-19 virus. Side effects from the vaccines, such as fever, are normal. They are a good sign that your body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

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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 and Guillain-Barré Syndrome following Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine and heart inflammation following PfizerBioNTech's and Moderna's vaccines—a very 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 reactions.

Thorough investigations have confirmed that all currently available COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. However, CDC prefers most people get the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

The monitoring systems ensure that doctors are notified to watch for signs of serious reactions, no matter how rare, and are aware of proper courses of treatment.

Do I need to be vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine if I have had COVID-19 and recovered?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection with COVID-19 is possible, the vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection.

Once I'm up to date with my COVID vaccines, do I need to keep wearing a mask?

To maximize protection from highly contagious variants and prevent possibly spreading COVID to others, both vaccinated and unvaccinated people should wear a mask inside public places when the COVID risk to your community is high.

If you're at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID, you can also protect yourself by:

- Keeping at least 6 feet away from people who don't live with you.
- Avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if you don't have soap and water.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated people must still follow federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial laws, rules, and regulations. That includes public transportation, airport/airplane, local business, and workplace guidance. It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can and following CDC's recommendations for how to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.

Additional information can be found at:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/tribal/index.html

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/keythingstoknow.html

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