

COVID-19 Vax Facts for Older Adults and Caregivers

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COVID-19 Vaccines – What you need to know

Why should I get the COVID-19 Shot?

Older adults are at high risk for a serious COVID-19 infection that can lead to hospitalization, long-term health problems or death. Older adults who live in long-term care facilities are at the highest risk of having a life-threatening illness.



8 out of 10 of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have been in adults over the age of 65.

Who is at risk for a serious COVID-19 infection?



Adults over 65



Overweight



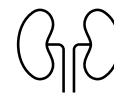
Lung Disease



Heart disease



Diabetes



Kidney Disease

Getting fully vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself from a serious COVID-19 infection.



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How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

mRNA and Vector vaccines: teaches the body to make a harmless protein that is unique to COVID-19. This triggers your body’s natural immune response to create antibodies to fight off the COVID-19 infection.

Inactive or weakened vaccines: creates a weakened virus that contains a harmless protein that is unique to COVID-19. This triggers the body’s natural immune response to create antibodies to fight off the COVID-19 infection.

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

No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Which COVID-19 vaccine is right for me?

All vaccines work very well to fight off serious COVID-19 infections. It is safe for most people to take any of the available vaccines. Depending on which vaccine is in stock, you will receive 1 or 2 shots to complete your vaccination.

Vaccine	Shot Schedule
Pfizer	2 shots, separated by 21 days
Moderna	2 shots, separated by 28 days
AstraZeneca	2 shots, separated by 28 to 84 days
Johnson & Johnson	1 shot only

How long does it take for the vaccine to fully protect me?

2 weeks after your final shot, you will be fully protected. This means that you are fully protected after 1 shot for 1-dose vaccines OR after the second shot for 2-dose vaccines.

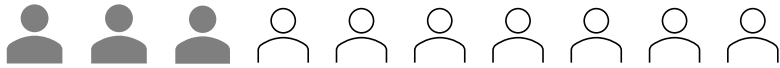
Does the vaccine work in all people?

The vaccine has been tested in thousands of people. It works well in adults of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

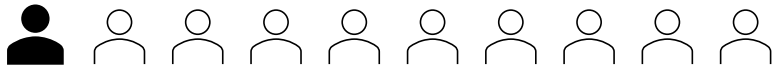


Can I get sick with the COVID-19 virus after being fully vaccinated?

What we know from large studies of thousands of people who were vaccinated is...



No more than 2 or 3 people out of 10 contracted a new case of COVID-19.



Only 1 out of 10 people were hospitalized or died from a new COVID-19 infection.

Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine – What to expect

How much does the COVID-19 vaccine cost?

All vaccines are free, you do not have to pay for the vaccine. You will not be asked for money and you will not receive a bill.

I do not have health insurance. Can I still get the COVID-19 vaccine?

All vaccines are free. You do not need health insurance to get the vaccine. You will not be asked for money and you will not receive a bill.

Where can I go to get vaccinated?

The local health department is working with hospitals, pharmacies, and mass vaccination sites in the community to offer the vaccine. Contact your local health department, hospital, or pharmacy to sign up.

How do I sign up to get my COVID-19 vaccine?

All older adults over 65 may sign up to get vaccinated now. Contact your local health department, hospital, or pharmacy to sign up. In Maryland, you may contact the Maryland Go Vax COVID-19 Vaccine Center at 1-855-634-6829 or visit: <https://www.marylandvax.org/>



When will it be my turn to be vaccinated?

All older adults over 65 may sign up to get vaccinated now. Each state has a different plan for deciding when groups of people will get vaccinated based on risk of having a serious COVID-19 infection. In Maryland, you may contact the Maryland Go Vax COVID-19 Vaccine Center at 1-855-634-6829 or visit: <https://www.marylandvax.org/>

Should I take a pain reliever before my vaccine?

Do not take over-the-counter pain relievers to get ready for the vaccine. Some pain medicines may slow down the body’s immune response. Contact your doctor or community pharmacist if you have questions about medicines that you are taking.

How do I prepare for my vaccine appointment?



Take your daily medicines



Eat meals as usual

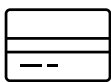


Arrive 15 minutes before your appointment



You may have to wait in line or get your vaccine outdoors. Wear the right clothes. Wear the right shoes. Bring an assistive device if you need it.

When you arrive at your appointment, you will be given...



COVID-19 Vaccine Record Card



Information about the vaccine

After your shot...



Sit for up to 30 minutes to be monitored for reactions



Appointment for second shot, if needed



Are there any side effect with the vaccine?

Many people experience mild side effects after getting their first or second shot. The symptoms may last for about 2 days.



Injection site reaction: People may experience redness, swelling or pain. To reduce discomfort apply a cool, wet cloth to the area



Body's reaction: As part of the body's normal immune response, some people may experience fever, chills, tiredness, headache or muscle aches



Allergic Reaction: Anaphylaxis is a rare but serious allergic reaction that is treated as an emergency. A person may begin to have trouble breathing, feel faint, have tongue or lip swelling, feel sick their stomach, or break out in a bad rash. This serious reaction usually happens right after getting the vaccine. It is why you will be monitored for 15-30 minutes after getting your shot. Also, the vaccination site is always prepared with trained healthcare professionals and medicines in the case of an emergency.



If you are experiencing serious symptoms after getting the COVID-19 vaccine seek help right away!

What if I missed my appointment for the second dose?

The second shot can be given up to 6 weeks after the first dose. Contact the site where you received your first shot or your local health department as soon as you remember. They will help you to make another appointment.

Where should I keep my COVID-19 Vaccine Record Card?

In your wallet or another place that you keep important medical information. It is also helpful to take a picture of your card. You may need to show proof of getting vaccinated in the future.



What if I lose my COVID-19 Vaccine Record Card?

Contact the location where you were vaccinated, they will be able to give you another copy of your card. If the location is no longer in service, contact your local health department.

How long does protection from the COVID-19 vaccine last?

What we know from large studies of thousands of different people is that vaccine protection lasts for at least 3 to 6 months. We are still learning about how long vaccine protection lasts.

COVID-19 Vaccine: Frequently Asked Questions

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

No. None of the COVID-19 contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Can the COVID-19 vaccine change my DNA?

No. COVID-19 vaccines do not change your DNA in any way.

How can I trust that the vaccine is safe since it was developed so quickly?

Studies to find new ways to give vaccines have been going on for many years. Millions of people in the United States have safely taken the COVID-19 vaccines using very strict safety rules. The COVID-19 vaccines are monitored very closely as people in every neighborhood and community around the country gets vaccinated.

If I already had COVID-19, should I still get vaccinated?

Yes. You should be vaccinated. While having COVID-19 in the past does provide some protection. This protection will wear off and you may be at risk of getting a new COVID-19 infection. You should sign up to get the shot after you are out of quarantine and feeling well.

Who should not get the COVID-19 vaccine?

People who had a serious allergic reaction called “anaphylaxis” to the COVID-19 vaccine or any of its ingredients such as polyethylene glycol (PEG), or polysorbate.



How long does it take for the vaccine to fully protect me?

2 weeks after your final shot, you will be fully protected. This means that you are fully protected after 1 shot for 1-dose vaccines OR after the second shot for 2-dose vaccines.

Should I still wear a mask after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. The vaccine lowers your chances of getting sick with COVID-19, but it does not guarantee it. Contact the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for advice about when it is safe to remove your mask around others. Call 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) OR visit www.cdc.gov/cdc-info on the internet.

What reasons should I get the COVID-19 shot?

- ✓ The vaccine lowers your chances of getting sick with COVID-19.
- ✓ The vaccine lowers your chances of getting sick with a serious or life threatening COVID-19 infection.
- ✓ The vaccine prevents the virus from spreading to you, your family, friends and others in the community.

Need Additional Help?

Stay up to date with the latest COVID-19 information:

Call the Centers for Disease Control information center at 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) OR visit www.cdc.gov/cdc-info

For advice about possible vaccine side effects:

Contact your local Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Find out about resources in your community: Dial 2-1-1 OR visit www.211.org

