Vaccination Station

The COVID-19 Vaccine: What You Need to Know

## The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized COVID-19 vaccines for distribution nationwide. Learn more about the vaccine and how it works so you can make the right decision for your health, the health of your loved ones and the health of your community. Note: The information presented here comes from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). For more information, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Findex.html) or [covid19.nih.gov](https://covid19.nih.gov/).

# Is the vaccine safe?

The U.S. vaccination development process is designed to ensure **all** vaccines are safe before being authorized. Although the COVID-19 vaccine was authorized in record time, the steps in the authorization process remained the same—no corners were cut. Here’s how the process works:

* Lab research and humane testing on animals is conducted.
* With authorization from the FDA, clinical trials begin in various phases.
* In each phase, the vaccine is tested for safety and efficacy. As the vaccine moves into the next phase, it is tested on progressively larger and more diverse groups of people.

# How was the vaccine authorized so quickly?

Many stages of the vaccination development process were run parallel to one another. For example, manufacture of the vaccine began while the vaccine was still in clinical trials, so that the vaccine would be ready to roll out if it was authorized. No step of the traditional development and review process was neglected.

# How does the vaccine work?

Some of the COVID-19 vaccines work by having the body mimic the “spike proteins” that stud the virus’s surface. First, the vaccine delivers a snippet of the virus’s genetic code, known as messenger RNA (mRNA). The mRNA then instructs the body to build copies of the spike protein that studs the virus’ surface. The body’s immune system responds by creating antibodies, which are then able to attack the COVID-19 virus, should you become infected. Other vaccines work by using another type of virus, known as an “adenovirus” to train the body to recognize the COVID-19 virus and produce antibodies for it.

Some vaccines require two doses to be fully effective. Your vaccination provider should provide the required guidelines at the time of your visit.



**For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the**

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at**

## [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Findex.html) **or the U.S. Department of Health**

## **and Human Services at** [combatcovid.hhs.gov](https://combatcovid.hhs.gov/)**.**

# When can I get the vaccine?

Distribution of the vaccine is being managed on a state-by-state basis. Please refer to

your local health department or personal doctor for further guidance.

# Where can I get the vaccine?

Please refer to your local health department for information on vaccination sites in your area. As the rollout of the vaccine progresses, retail pharmacies (Walgreens, CVS, etc.) are expected to be able to distribute vaccines. Contact your local retail pharmacy to see whether you can be notified if (and when) vaccines become available.

# Is the vaccine free?

The vaccine itself is available at no cost. However, your vaccination provider (doctor’s office, hospital, clinic, etc.) may charge separate administrative fees. If you have health insurance, the plan will pay the administrative fee for in-network providers. The plan will pay a reasonable fee for out-of-network providers. If the out-of-network provider is part of the CDC’s COVID-19 Vaccine Program, they should not send you a bill for the difference, if any, between what the plan pays and the cost of the visit.

# Does the vaccine have side effects?

You may experience some side effects after receiving the vaccine—these are usually signs that the body is building up immunity and should fade after a few days. Common symptoms may include:

* Pain and swelling at the site of the shot
* Fever
* Chills
* Tiredness
* Headache

For more information on the vaccine’s potential side effects, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html).

# What should I do after getting the vaccine?

You will not get full protection from COVID-19 until about two weeks after being fully vaccinated. Because of this—and because the vaccine is slowly being rolled out nationwide—you should continue to practice the following safety measures to protect those around you even after you become vaccinated:

* Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth
* Wash your hands often with soap and water
* Stay six feet away from others
* Avoid crowds

For further guidance on how to protect yourself from COVID-19, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html).

# Am I required to get the vaccine?

[INSERT SPECIFIC COMPANY GUIDELINES]. If you have any questions, please contact [COMPANY CONTACT].