

FAQ ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Frequently Asked Questions and Key Messages for Communities

1 WHY SHOULD I GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19?

COVID-19 can cause serious illness or even death. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you. All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19 disease. Even if you still get infected after you get vaccinated, the vaccine may prevent serious illness.

2 CAN THE VACCINE GIVE ME COVID-19?

No, the vaccine does not cause COVID-19. None of the approved COVID-19 vaccines contain the virus that causes COVID-19. It does take a few weeks after vaccination for your body to build up antibodies to protect you from the virus. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after getting the vaccine and still get sick.

3 WILL THE SHOT HURT OR MAKE ME SICK?

Some people might get sore muscles, feel tired, or have mild fever after getting the vaccine. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will last no longer than a few days. If you have any concerns, call your doctor or nurse.

4 HOW MANY SHOTS OF COVID-19 VACCINE WILL BE NEEDED?

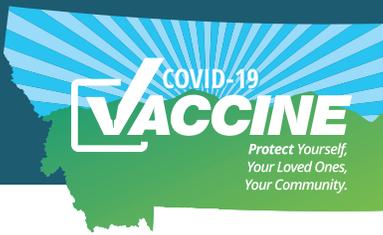
This depends on which vaccine you received. With both COVID-19 mRNA vaccines, you will need two shots to get the most protection. The timing between your first and second shot depends on which vaccine you received.

Pfizer-BioNTech doses should be given 3 weeks (21 days) apart.

Moderna doses should be given 1 month (28 days) apart.

These products are not interchangeable with other COVID-19 vaccine products. Both doses of the series should be completed with the same product. You should get your second shot as close to the recommended 3-week or 1-month interval as possible. However, your second dose may be given up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose, if necessary. You should not get the second dose earlier than the recommended interval.

If you received the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine (Johnson & Johnson), you do not need a second shot. All people for whom vaccination is indicated should receive one dose.



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5 WHICH IS THE BEST VACCINE FOR ME?

The best COVID-19 vaccine is the vaccine that is available to you. The CDC and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) do not have a stated preference between the available vaccines. Each vaccine is equally effective at preventing serious illness and death.

6 SHOULD I GET VACCINATED IF I ALREADY HAD COVID-19?

Yes, you should still be vaccinated because you can become infected more than once. Although you may have some short-term natural protection (known as immunity) after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection will last. Vaccination is the best protection, and it is safe. People who get COVID-19 can have serious illnesses, and some have terrible symptoms that continue for months. If you have had COVID-19, ask your doctor, nurse, or clinic when you should be vaccinated.

7 WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO GET THE VACCINE?

Although CDC makes recommendations for who should be offered COVID-19 vaccine first, each state has its own plan for deciding who will be vaccinated first and how they can receive vaccines. Please contact your local health department for more information on COVID-19 vaccination in your area.

8 DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR THE VACCINE?

No. The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States.

9 DO I STILL NEED TO WEAR A MASK AND SOCIALLY DISTANCE AFTER GETTING THE VACCINE?

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like wearing a mask over your nose and mouth, washing your hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from people who don't live with you. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations for how to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.