

## COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

---

**1. I heard that this vaccine was rushed and the future batches will be more effective. I'm going to wait it out.**

In developing a vaccine for COVID-19, researchers had to work quickly, but not at the risk of anyone's safety. Medical researchers did not cut any corners or skip any steps. The FDA requires that vaccines undergo a rigorous scientific process, including three phases of clinical trials, before they authorize or approve the vaccine. Because of the historic nature of this pandemic, these research phases were able to happen at the same time, which accelerated the timeline. The COVID-19 vaccines are subject to the same safety standards as other vaccine trials.

**2. When will I get my second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine?**

You should make every effort to receive the second dose of your Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine exactly 21 days after the first dose for Pfizer and 28 days after the first dose for Moderna. If it isn't possible to get the second dose on the right day, the second dose can be given early, up to 4 days before it is due. Additionally, the second dose can be given as late as 42 days (6 weeks) after the first dose. The Janssen vaccine does not require a second dose.

**3. One dose should be enough, right?**

It depends on the vaccine you have been given. If your vaccine is Pfizer or Moderna and you do not receive the second dose, you will not be fully immunized and be at higher risk of getting symptomatic COVID-19 than if you received both doses. If you have been given the Janssen vaccine, it only takes one dose.

**4. My concerns are with my religion as I heard the vaccine contains pork products.**

The Moderna, Pfizer, and Janssen vaccines do not have any pork or animal products listed in their ingredients. For a full list of ingredients, please see available vaccine fact sheets ([Moderna](#), [Pfizer](#), [Janssen](#)).

**5. I am getting the flu shot, that should be sufficient.**

Getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, however flu vaccination has many other important benefits. Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death.

**6. I have some underlying conditions, which one of those conditions will keep me from getting the vaccine?**

Immunocompromised people may receive the COVID-19 vaccine if they have no reason to believe that getting the vaccine would be harmful to them. However, it is important to talk to your health care provider if you have questions about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine in immunocompromised populations or if severe allergic reactions to other vaccines have occurred in the past. People with a history of severe allergic reactions to any ingredient of a COVID-19 vaccine should not receive that vaccine. For a full list of ingredients, please see available vaccine fact sheets ([Moderna](#), [Pfizer](#), [Janssen](#)). Neither vaccine contains eggs, preservatives, or latex.

**7. I'm pregnant, can I get the vaccine?**

Pregnant or breastfeeding people may choose to be vaccinated when the vaccine becomes available to them. Talking to a health care provider may help with deciding whether to get the vaccine, but it is not required for vaccination. Based on current knowledge, experts believe that mRNA vaccines (like the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines) are unlikely to pose a risk for pregnant or breastfeeding people or their babies. We don't yet have information about the Janssen vaccine and pregnancy, but it is likely to be similar to the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

**8. No way I'm getting this vaccine, I heard it changes your DNA!**

No, mRNA from the Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines never enters the nucleus of the cell and does not affect your DNA. mRNA is a naturally occurring and temporary genetic molecule that instructs our cells how to create certain proteins in the body. After our cells make copies of the virus' protein, our immune system is triggered and recognizes that the protein should not be in our body. Our body then builds antibodies so that it remembers how to fight the virus if we are infected in the future. The Janssen vaccine is a modified adenovirus vector DNA vaccine, so the viral DNA goes into the nucleus of the cell, but should not change any human DNA. The goal of every vaccine is the same -- they just use a different strategy to achieve that goal.

**9. If I am fully vaccinated (two doses for Pfizer and Moderna, one dose for Janssen) can I still get COVID-19? How effective are COVID-19 vaccines?**

Current studies show that it takes two doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines to be the most effective. Unlike the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, which each require two doses, the Janssen vaccine requires only one dose.

**10. I heard the side effects are worse than if you got COVID-19!**

The process of building immunity can cause symptoms after receiving an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna) or modified adenovirus vector DNA vaccine (Janssen). These symptoms are normal and show that your body's immune system is responding to a vaccine. Other routine vaccines, like the flu vaccine, have similar side effects. If you experience discomfort after the first dose of the vaccine, it is very important that you still receive the second dose a few weeks later for full protection. The Janssen vaccine may cause less frequent and milder symptoms.

**11. What are the side effects?**

After receiving an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna) or modified adenovirus vector DNA vaccine (Janssen), you may experience mild to moderate side effects after receiving the vaccine. Side effects typically go away on their own after a few days. The most commonly reported side effects are: Pain, swelling, and redness at the injection site, tenderness and swelling of the lymph nodes in the same arm of the injection fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, nausea/vomiting, and fever.

**12. Can I get the vaccine if I'm undocumented or without a valid ID or Social Security Number?**

You do not need a government-issued ID like a driver's license or passport to get the vaccine. Some medical forms may have a field to enter your social security number, but you are not required to complete it. If a provider is requiring you to show identification in order to get vaccinated, you can submit a report using the state's [COVID-19 Concerns form](#). You do not need to be a U.S. citizen, and you will not need to prove lawful presence to get a COVID-19 vaccine in Colorado. Know that the [Department of Homeland Security](#) announced that vaccination sites will be considered sensitive locations. This means that ICE will not carry out enforcement activities at or near vaccination sites. State and local public health agencies will never share your information for any immigration or law enforcement purposes. And receiving the COVID-19 vaccine will not count against you in any [public charge determinations](#).