



Addressing Your Concerns About the Vaccine

What Is the COVID-19 Vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine helps us fight the virus that causes the COVID-19 illness. Vaccines work by helping the body learn how to recognize viruses and build protection against the illness that they cause.

As of January 2021, two vaccines are approved for Emergency Use Authorization (Pfizer and Moderna). These vaccines require people who receive the vaccine to get two shots. The first shot starts building protection and the second shot, given a few weeks later, helps create the most protection the vaccine can offer.

Is the COVID-19 Vaccine Safe?

Yes. The [CDC](#) has determined the vaccines are safe and effective. The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all other approved vaccines. All COVID-19 vaccines being administered were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. No serious safety concerns were identified. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) monitor all vaccines to look for safety issues after they are authorized and in use.

What Are the Benefits of the Vaccine?

Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step to prevent you from getting sick with the COVID-19 virus. The vaccine will help your body fight the COVID-19 virus and ease your symptoms if you do become sick. Vaccines are also a tool for reducing infections and protecting your friends, family, and other people around you who may be at risk of illness.

Are There Side Effects and What Are They?

Yes, the most common side effect is pain at the injection site, and some individuals experience symptoms like fever and chills. These side effects tend to be mild to moderate and go away quickly. These side effects are signs that the immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do: building up protection against the disease. Serious side effects after vaccination are very rare.

When Will the Vaccine be Available to Me?

Talk with your doctor, case manager, and other staff to find out when the vaccine may be available to you. Those who have a higher risk of COVID-19 exposure, including people experiencing homelessness, may have access to the vaccine earlier than others, but it will depend on the local plans in your community and the amount of the vaccine available.

Will I Have to Pay for the COVID-19 Vaccine?

No. There is no cost associated with getting vaccinated.

Still Unsure or Have More Questions?

It is normal to feel unsure about getting vaccinated. Learning more about the vaccine is an important step in making a thoughtful decision. Talk with your doctor, case manager, or a healthcare professional that you trust to ask for more information.

Where you can get more information:

- [CDC](#)
- [American Association of Retired Persons \(AARP\)](#)
- [National Health Care for the Homeless Council \(NHCHC\)](#)