

# Do You Have Questions About the **COVID-19 Vaccine?**

We have collected a list of the most frequently asked questions from people about to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Don't see your question listed? Visit [www.phila.gov/covid-19](http://www.phila.gov/covid-19) or call **215-685-5488** for more information.

## How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

**COVID-19 vaccines are medicines that help your immune system fight the COVID-19 virus.** They come in the form of one or two injections depending on the vaccine brand.

The vaccine helps your body's immune (defense) system recognize the COVID-19 virus. After receiving the injection, the vaccine will greatly reduce your chances of getting sick.

## Are you injecting the COVID-19 virus?

**No.** COVID-19 vaccines contain incomplete pieces of the COVID-19 virus. None of the COVID-19 vaccines contain live COVID-19 virus.

## Is getting a COVID-19 vaccine necessary?

**We strongly recommend getting vaccinated.** The vaccines decrease your chances of getting sick from COVID-19 disease. They also reduce the spread of the virus, and help keep your family, neighbors, and friends safe.

## Have the vaccines been tested?

**Yes. The vaccines were tested in large clinical trials of volunteers with diverse races, ethnicities, and underlying medical conditions.**

Each vaccine received an Emergency Use Authorization after trials showed that it was safe and very effective at preventing COVID-19 disease illness and death. Hundreds of millions of COVID-19 vaccine doses have now been administered in the United States and systems remain in place to closely monitor safety of the vaccines.

## Do I still need to wear a mask and social distance after getting vaccinated?

**In general, we still need to be cautious until most people have received the vaccine and the virus stops spreading.** Please continue to follow guidance on masking where it is required. However, there are many things that people who are vaccinated can safely do. If vaccinated, you do not need to get a routine test for COVID-19 disease or quarantine when traveling. You also do not need to quarantine after exposure to someone with COVID-19 disease unless you develop symptoms.

## Can I get COVID-19 after getting vaccinated?

**Getting vaccinated greatly reduces your chances of getting sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19 disease. However, the vaccines are not perfect.** For these reasons, continue to follow any guidance on masking and if you feel sick, please isolate and get tested for COVID-19 disease. Scientists are continuing to study how long vaccine protection lasts and if extra doses of vaccine will be needed in the future.

## Can children receive a vaccine?

**Yes.** Currently, only the Pfizer vaccine is available to those 12 years and older. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are available to those 18 years and older. Hopefully, all the vaccines will be approved for children in the future.

## What are the potential side-effects?

**Potential short-term side effects include a sore arm, general muscle aches, headache, fatigue, chills, and fever.** These side effects are signals that your immune system is working and your body is building protection against the COVID-19 virus.

## Do I need a vaccine if I had COVID-19?

**Yes.** We do not know how long someone is protected after getting COVID-19 disease, and so recommend getting a vaccine. However, getting infected with COVID-19 disease again within 90 days is uncommon, so if you had a recent COVID-19 disease infection you can delay vaccination until the end of this period or get the vaccine as soon as you have been cleared from isolation.

## Is the COVID-19 vaccine free?

**COVID-19 vaccines are free to everyone.** You do not need insurance. If you do have insurance, then your insurance may be billed a fee for giving the vaccine, but you do not need to pay anything.

## Where do I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

You can make a COVID-19 vaccine appointment with your doctor, local health center, nearby pharmacy or a community health organization.

