



COVID-19

ACT NOW!



What to Expect at Your Appointment to Get Vaccinated for COVID-19

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It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease with new vaccines, you may have questions about what happens before, during, and after your appointment to get vaccinated. These tips will help you know what to expect when you get vaccinated, what information your provider will give you, and resources you can use to monitor your health after you are vaccinated.



Before getting your vaccine

Find out if COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for you right now.

How Do I Get a Vaccine?

CDC makes recommendations for [who should get the vaccine first](#), then each state makes its own plan.

Choose your state or territory below to find your health department:

Select State / Territory ▾

Learn more about the different types of COVID-19 vaccines and [how they work](#).

- - [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) COVID-19 vaccine
- [Moderna](#) COVID-19 vaccine
- [Johnson and Johnson's Janssen](#) COVID-19 vaccine

Learn more about the [benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccination](#).

At your vaccination appointment

When you
get the
vaccine,



you *and* your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks that cover your nose and mouth. Stay 6 feet away from others while inside and in lines. [Learn more](#) about protecting yourself when going to get your COVID-19 vaccine.

You should receive a vaccination card that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it. Keep your vaccination card in case you need it for future use. Learn more about [how to find your vaccination record](#).

You should receive a paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you are being offered. Each authorized COVID-19 vaccine has its own fact sheet that contains information to help you understand the risks and benefits of receiving that specific vaccine. Learn more about [different COVID-19 vaccines](#).

All people who get a COVID-19 vaccine should be monitored on-site. Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions](#).

At your vaccination appointment, ask your vaccination provider about getting started with v-safe, a free, smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through **v-safe**, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any [side effects](#) after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. V-safe also reminds you to get your second dose if you need one. Learn more at [about v-safe](#).

Don't get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines

Wait at least 14 days before getting any other vaccine, including a flu or shingles vaccine, after you get your COVID-19 vaccine. Or if you get any other vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccine.

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine within 14 days of another vaccine, you do **not** need to be revaccinated with either vaccine. You should still complete both vaccine series on schedule.

When we have more data on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines given at the same time as other vaccines, CDC may update this recommendation.

Considerations for taking medication before getting vaccinated

For most people, it is not recommended to avoid, discontinue, or delay medications for underlying medical conditions around the time of COVID-19 vaccination. However, your healthcare provider should talk to you about what is currently known and not known about the effectiveness of getting a COVID-19 vaccine when taking medications that suppress the immune system.

It is not recommended you take over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen, aspirin, or acetaminophen, before vaccination for the purpose of trying to prevent vaccine-related side effects. It is not known how these medications may affect how well the vaccine works. However, if you take these medications regularly for other reasons, you should keep taking them before you get vaccinated. It is also not



recommended to take antihistamines before getting a COVID-19 vaccine to try to prevent allergic reactions.

If you have questions about medications that you are taking, talk to your doctor or your vaccination provider.

If You Need a Second Shot

If you receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine ([Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#) or [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](#)), you will need 2 shots to get the most protection. You should get your second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you [not to get it](#).

If you receive the viral vector COVID-19 vaccine, [Johnson & Johnson's Janssen \(J&J/Janssen\) COVID-19 vaccine](#), you will only need 1 shot.

Timing of your second shot

The timing between your first and second shot depends on which vaccine you received.

- If you received the [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#), you should get your second

shot 3 weeks (or 21 days) after your first.

- If you received the [Moderna](#) COVID-19 Vaccine, you should get your second shot 4 weeks (or 28 days) after your first.

You should **get your second shot as close to the recommended 3-week or 4-weeks 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.

Scheduling your second shot

If you need help scheduling your vaccination appointment for your second shot, contact the location that set up your first appointment for assistance. For questions, or if you are having trouble using vaccine management or scheduling systems, reach out to the organization that enrolled you in the system. This may be your state or local health department, employer, or vaccination provider.

What to expect after getting a COVID-19

Learn about [common side effects](#) after getting a COVID-19 vaccine and get helpful tips on how to reduce your pain and discomfort.

It takes time for your body to [build protection after any vaccination](#). COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until about 2 weeks after your second shot. For COVID-19 vaccines that require 1 shot, it takes about 2 weeks after vaccination for your body to build protection.

Learn more about what to expect [after getting a COVID-19 vaccine](#).

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), Division of Viral Diseases