COVID-19

Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccine

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CDC now recommends that people aged 65 years and older, residents aged 18 years and older in long-term care settings, and people aged 50–64 years with underlying medical conditions **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 Vaccine at least 6 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. Other groups **may** receive a booster shot based on their individual risk and benefit. Learn more.

Find a Vaccine

Vaccines are now widely available. In many cases, you do not need an appointment.

- The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States, regardless of their immigration or health insurance status.
- 90% of people in the United States live within 5 miles of a COVID-19 vaccine location.
- Learn how to find a COVID-19 vaccine so you can get it as soon as you can.

At Your Vaccination Appointment

- **Before you arrive, contact the site where you will be vaccinated or review your appointment confirmation email for** details about what identification you may need to bring to your vaccination appointment.
- **When you get a vaccine, you** *and* **your healthcare provider 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 paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you receive.** Each approved and 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.
- **After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, you should be monitored on site for at least 15 minutes.** Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions.
- **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. Parents and guardians can enroll adolescents (ages 12 and older) or dependents in v-safe and complete health check-ins on their behalf after COVID-19 vaccination. Register or sign into v-safe. Learn more about **v-safe**.

▶ **Watch Video:** Use v-safe to tell CDC how you're feeling after COVID-19 vaccination [00:00:34]

Getting Your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card

At your first vaccination appointment, you should get a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it.

- **Keep your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card** in case you need it for future use. Consider taking a picture of your card after your vaccination appointment as a backup copy.

- **If you did not receive a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card at your first appointment**, contact the vaccination provider site where you got your first shot or your state health department to find out how you can get a card.

If you need an additional dose or a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine:

- **Bring your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card with you to your appointment for an additional dose or a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine** so your provider can fill in the information about your additional dose or booster dose.
- **If you have lost your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card or don't have a copy**, contact your vaccination provider directly to access your vaccination record.
  - If you cannot contact your vaccination provider directly, contact your state health department's immunization information system (IIS). Vaccination providers are required to report COVID-19 vaccinations to their IIS and related systems.
  - If you enrolled in v-safe or VaxText after your first vaccine dose, you can access your vaccination information using those tools.
  - If you have made every effort to locate your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card information, are unable to get a copy or replacement of your card, and need an additional COVID-19 vaccine dose or a booster dose, talk to a vaccination provider.

CDC does **not** maintain vaccination records or determine how vaccination records are used, and CDC does **not** provide the white CDC-labeled COVID-19 Vaccination Record card to people. These cards are distributed to vaccination providers by state health departments.

Please contact your state health department if you have additional questions about vaccination records. Your local or state health department can also provide more information about the laws or regulations in your area.

Getting a COVID–19 Vaccine with Other Vaccines

You can get a COVID-19 vaccine and any other vaccines, including a flu vaccine, at the same visit. Experience with other vaccines has shown that the way our bodies develop protection, known as an immune response, after getting vaccinated and possible side effects of vaccines are generally the same when given alone or with other vaccines. Learn more about the timing of other vaccines.

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 from your initial vaccination. **COVID-19 vaccines are not interchangeable.** If you received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, you should get the same product (or brand) for your second shot. 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.

People with moderately to severely compromised immune systems should receive an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine after the initial 2 doses.
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.

Learn more about getting your second shot.

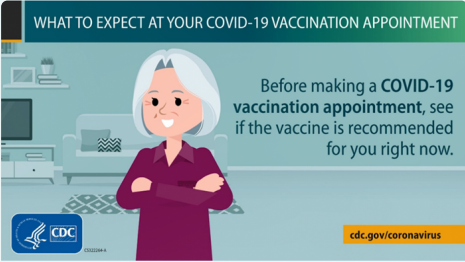Learn more about booster shots.

What to Expect After Getting a COVID–19 Vaccine

You may experience side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Get helpful tips on how to reduce any pain or discomfort.

It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. Most people are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after your second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines, or 2 weeks after the single-dose J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. You should keep using all the tools available to protect yourself and others until you are fully vaccinated.

Learn More about Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccine

VIDEO

What to Expect at Your COVID-19 Vaccination Appointment

Video Length: 00:00:48

Watch Video

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