



What Tribal Communities Need to Know About COVID-19

COVID-19



You can help stop the pandemic by getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

To protect our elders and our community, we need to use all our prevention tools. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect our health. Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses so you can fight COVID-19.

Contact your health department or clinic to find out when and where vaccines are available in your community.

The COVID-19 vaccine can help keep you from getting sick.

COVID-19 can cause serious illness or death. All COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States are effective at helping prevent COVID-19. Even if you become sick after you are vaccinated, you should be protected from more serious illness. All three vaccines ([Pfizer-BioNTech](#), [Moderna](#), and [Johnson & Johnson/Janssen](#)) are either authorized or approved for adults. In addition, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is authorized for people 5 to 15 years of age and approved for those 16 and 17 years of age.

The COVID-19 vaccine will be free for you.

The United States government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people in the United States. No one should be charged for the vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccine will not give you COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines cannot make you sick with COVID-19. They do not contain the virus that causes COVID-19. Getting vaccinated may also protect others around you.

You should still get vaccinated if you have already had COVID-19.

Even if you have already had COVID-19, it is possible that you could get COVID-19 again. Experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after having COVID-19; however, vaccination is the best protection from re-infection.

If you have recovered from COVID-19, ask your health provider when you should be vaccinated.

You should still take steps to protect yourself and others after getting vaccinated.

Once you are fully vaccinated, you can resume many activities that you did prior to the pandemic. To reduce the risk of being infected and possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of [substantial or high transmission](#).

Getting the vaccine and following CDC's recommendations for protecting yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19. Learn about CDC's recommendations for [COVID-19 vaccine booster shots](#).

After COVID-19 vaccination, you may have some side effects.

You may have pain, redness, and swelling in the arm where you got the shot. You may also have tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, and fever for a few days. These are normal signs that your body is building protection against COVID-19. After getting the shot, you will be asked to wait for 15–30 minutes to see that you are okay.

The U.S. vaccine safety system monitors the safety of all vaccines.



All COVID-19 vaccines used in the United States were tested in clinical studies involving thousands of people, including American Indians and Alaska Natives. These studies were done to make sure the vaccines meet safety standards and protect people of different ages, genders, races, and ethnicities. All authorized COVID-19 vaccines meet the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization (EUA). Approved COVID-19 vaccines meet the same safety standards as other vaccines used in the United States.

CDC has developed a new way to help identify any safety issues with COVID-19 vaccines called v-safe (vsafe.cdc.gov). A smartphone is needed to use v-safe, which sends texts to your phone periodically. Sign up to participate after you are vaccinated!

If you experienced a side effect following COVID-19 vaccination, you can also complete a form and upload it to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) [↗](#).

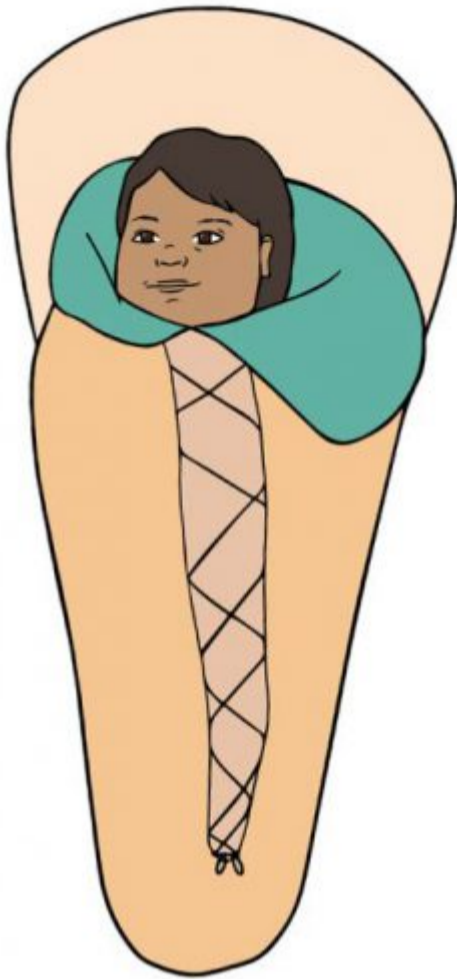
Even if you have had a severe or immediate allergic reaction to an ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine, you may still be able to get a different type of COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction — even if it was not severe — to any in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna). If you have had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction to any [ingredient](#) in Johnson & Johnson's Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get the J&J/Janssen vaccine.

If you are not able to get the second shot of an mRNA vaccine because you had an allergic reaction to the first shot, ask your doctor if you should get a different type of COVID-19 vaccine. If you have had an allergic reaction to other vaccines or injectable medications, talk to your healthcare provider.

You may still get vaccinated if you have severe allergies to oral medications, food, pets, insect stings, latex, or things in the environment like pollen or dust.

If you are pregnant or want to have a baby one day, COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for you.



COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people 5 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future. Pregnant and recently pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared with non-pregnant people. There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

Based on what we know, COVID-19 vaccines do not cause any problems with becoming pregnant.

The COVID-19 vaccine will not change your DNA.

Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection, but COVID-19 vaccines —like any other vaccine—cannot affect your DNA in any way.

It is safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if you have an underlying medical condition.

People with medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. Vaccination is especially important for people with these conditions. People with a weakened immune system may not get as much protection from COVID-19 vaccination as those with a functioning immune system. That is why CDC recommends that people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems receive an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after a second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. [Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines for moderately to severely immunocompromised people.](#)

Use and distribute the original, unaltered HHS/CDC COVID-19 vaccination card.

CDC advises against altering the HHS/CDC COVID-19 vaccination card in any way, which would include embedding tribal names or logos onto the cards. While the intent of doing so may be to promote vaccination among tribal members, COVID-19 vaccination cards that have been altered may not be recognized as sufficient proof of vaccination to allow for entry into other countries. To ensure that the vaccination cards people receive will be accepted as valid proof of vaccination, CDC recommends that tribes, tribal-serving organizations, and healthcare providers use and distribute the original, unaltered HHS/CDC COVID-19 vaccination card.