



# Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine: Overview and Safety

Updated May 20, 2022

Learn about [CDC's new COVID-19 booster guidance for people ages 5 years and older](#).

## Recommended for People 18 Years and Older

[Stay up to date](#)

[Guidance for people who are immunocompromised](#)

## General Information

**Manufacturer:** Janssen Pharmaceuticals Companies of Johnson & Johnson

**Type of Vaccine:** [Viral Vector](#)

**Number of Shots:** 1 shot may be given [in some situations](#).

**How Given:** Shot in the muscle of the upper arm

People ages 18 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised and who received Johnson & Johnson's Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine should get a second dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna).

**Does NOT Contain:** Eggs, preservatives, latex, or metals  
[See full list of ingredients](#)

**Name:** JNJ-78436735

**Booster Shot:** Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster. Some people can also choose to receive a second booster.

## When to Consider J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine

In most situations, Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are preferred over the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for primary and booster vaccination due to the [risk of serious adverse events](#). Vaccine recipients must be informed of the risks and benefits of J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination. The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine may be [considered in some situations](#), including for persons who:

- Had a severe reaction after an mRNA vaccine dose or who have a severe allergy to an ingredient of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines).
- Would otherwise remain unvaccinated for COVID-19 due to limited access to Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines).

Wants to get the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine despite the safety concerns.

- Learn more about [the considerations for J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine](#).

## Safety Data Summary

In most situations, Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are preferred over the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for primary and booster vaccination due to the [risk of serious adverse events](#).

- There is a plausible causal relationship between J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine and a rare and serious adverse event—blood clots with low platelets (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome, or TTS).
  - It occurs at a rate of about 3.83 cases per million Janssen doses and has resulted in deaths.
  - Read about the latest [updates on J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine](#).

Learn more about [vaccine safety monitoring](#) after a vaccine is authorized or approved for use.

## How Well the Vaccine Works

- The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine was 66.3% effective in clinical trials at preventing laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection in people who received the vaccine and had no evidence of being previously infected. People had the most protection 2 weeks after getting vaccinated.
- In the clinical trials, the vaccine had high efficacy at preventing hospitalization and death in people who did get sick.

Learn more about [demographic information for people who participated in the trials \[PDF – 62 pages\]](#) [↗](#).

## Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Ingredients

The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine contains a piece of a modified virus that is not the virus that causes COVID-19. This modified virus is called the vector virus. The vector virus cannot reproduce itself, so it cannot cause COVID-19. This vector virus [gives instructions](#) to cells in the body to create an [immune response](#). This response helps protect you from getting sick with COVID-19 in the future. After the body produces an immune response, it gets rid of all of the vaccine ingredients just as it would discard any information that cells no longer need. This process is a part of normal body functioning.

All COVID-19 vaccines are manufactured with as few ingredients as possible and with only the necessary amounts of each ingredient. Nearly all of the ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines are also the ingredients in many foods – fats, sugars, and salts. Each ingredient in the vaccine serves a specific purpose as seen in the table below.

## Full list of ingredients

The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine contains the following ingredients:

Type of Ingredient	Ingredient	Purpose
A harmless version of a virus unrelated to the COVID-19 virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recombinant, replication-incompetent Ad26 vector, encoding a stabilized variant of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike (S) protein</li></ul>	Provides instructions the body uses to build a harmless piece of a protein from the virus that causes COVID-19. This protein causes an immune response that helps protect the body from getting sick with COVID-19 in the future.

Sugars, salts, acid, and acid stabilizer

- Polysorbate-80
- 2-hydroxypropyl- $\beta$ -cyclodextrin
- Trisodium citrate dihydrate
- Sodium chloride (basic table salt)
- Citric acid monohydrate (closely related to lemon juice)
- Ethanol (a type of alcohol)

Work together to help keep the vaccine molecules stable while the vaccine is manufactured, shipped, and stored until it is ready to be given to a vaccine recipient.

## Ingredients that are NOT used in COVID-19 vaccines

The above table lists ALL ingredients in the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. There are NO ingredients in this vaccine beyond what is listed in that table. The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine has:

- **No preservatives** like thimerosal or mercury or any other preservatives.
- **No antibiotics** like sulfonamide or any other antibiotics.
- **No medicines or therapeutics** like ivermectin or any other medications.

## COVID-19

vaccines are not manufactured in facilities that produce food products).

- **No metals** like iron, nickel, cobalt, titanium, rare earth alloys, or any manufactured products like microelectronics, electrodes, carbon nanotubes or other nanostructures, or nanowire semiconductors.
- **No latex.** The vial stoppers used to hold the vaccine also do not contain latex.

### Related Pages

- › [Possible Side Effects](#)
- › [Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- › [Benefits of Getting Vaccinated](#)
- › [How Vaccines Work](#)
- › [Viral Vector Vaccines](#)



### For Healthcare Workers

[Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine: General information, schedule, and administration overview.](#)

### Resources

[Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers \[242 KB, 7 pages\]](#) [↗](#)

[Safety and Reactogenicity Data](#)