



COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination

Updated Oct. 4, 2023

COVID-19 vaccine recommendations have been updated as of October 3, 2023 to add 2023-2024 updated Novavax COVID-19 vaccine. The content on this page will be updated to align with the new recommendations. [Learn more](#).

Below are answers to commonly asked questions about COVID-19 vaccination.

Getting Your Updated COVID-19 Vaccine(s)

Can I choose which COVID-19 vaccine I get?

Yes, you can choose which [COVID-19 vaccine](#) to get.

Learn more about the [vaccines that are available](#).

Can I get more than 1 updated COVID-19 vaccine?

People who are [moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) may get additional doses of updated COVID-19 vaccine 2 or more months after getting the last updated COVID-19 vaccine.

[Talk to your healthcare provider about additional updated doses](#).

If I am pregnant or planning to become pregnant, can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for [people who are pregnant](#), breastfeeding, or trying to get pregnant now, as well as people who [might become pregnant in the future](#). People who get a COVID-19 infection during pregnancy are more likely to deliver a [preterm](#) (born earlier than 37 weeks of pregnancy) or stillborn infant and may also be more likely to have other pregnancy complications.

COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy helps:

- Prevent severe illness and death in [people who are pregnant](#)
- [Protect babies younger than 6 months old](#) from hospitalization caused by COVID-19

Learn more about vaccination considerations and the [safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines](#) for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy helps:

- Prevent severe illness and death in people who are pregnant
- Protect children aged 6 months to 5 years from hospitalization caused by COVID-19

Learn more about vaccination considerations and the [safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines](#) for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Do I need to wait after getting a flu vaccine or another vaccine before getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

There is no recommended waiting period between getting a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines. You can [get a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines](#), including a [flu vaccine](#), at the same visit.

Can I get vaccinated against COVID-19 while I am currently sick with COVID-19?

No. You should wait to be vaccinated until after you complete your isolation period to avoid potentially exposing healthcare personnel and others during the vaccination visit.

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

If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

You should get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you already had COVID-19.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from COVID-19 infection provides added protection against COVID-19. You may consider delaying your vaccine by 3 months. However, certain factors could be reasons to get a vaccine sooner rather than later, such as:

- personal risk of severe disease,
- risk of disease in a loved one or close contact,
- local COVID-19 hospital admission level,
- and the most common COVID-19 variant currently causing illness.

People who already had COVID-19 and do not get vaccinated after their recovery are [more likely to get COVID-19 again](#) than those who get vaccinated after their recovery.

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

Getting Children and Teens Vaccinated

Are the COVID-19 vaccines for children the same ones that are given to adults?

The COVID-19 vaccines for children have the same active ingredients as the vaccines given to adults. However, children receive a smaller, age-appropriate dose that is right for them. The smaller doses were rigorously tested and found to create the needed immune response for each age group.

Why should my children and teens get vaccinated against COVID-19?

COVID-19 can make children and teens very sick and sometimes requires treatment in a hospital. Getting [children and teens vaccinated against COVID-19](#) can help keep them from getting really sick if they do get COVID-19, including protecting them from short and long-term complications and hospitalization.

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

Is there any reason to wait to get my child vaccinated?

Parents and caregivers should get their child vaccinated as soon as possible. Getting vaccinated provides the best protection against serious illness if a child gets infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Safety

What are the risks of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

Adults and children may have [some side effects](#) from a COVID-19 vaccine, including pain, redness or swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea. These side effects typically resolve after a few days. [Serious side effects are rare](#) but may occur.

What are the ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines?

Vaccine ingredients vary by manufacturer. None of the vaccines contain eggs, gelatin, latex, or preservatives.

Learn more about [the ingredients](#) in available COVID-19 vaccines

Are COVID-19 vaccines safe even though the vaccines were developed rapidly?

Although COVID-19 vaccines were developed quickly, research and development on vaccines like these has been underway for decades. All vaccine development steps were taken to ensure COVID-19 vaccine safety and effectiveness, including:

- **Clinical Trials** – All vaccines in the United States must go through [three phases of clinical trials](#) to ensure they are [safe and effective](#). The phases overlapped to speed up the process, but all phases were completed.
- **Authorization or Approval** – Before vaccines are available to people, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reviews data from clinical trials. FDA has determined [COVID-19 vaccines](#) meet FDA's standards and has granted those vaccines [Emergency Use Authorizations \(EUAs\)](#) or full FDA approval.
- **Tracking Safety Using Vaccine Monitoring Systems** – Like every other vaccine approved for use in the United States, COVID-19 vaccines continue to be monitored for safety and effectiveness. Hundreds of millions of people in the United States have safely received COVID-19 vaccines. CDC and FDA continue to provide updated information on the safety of U.S. authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines using data from [the Vaccine Safety Datalink \(VSD\)](#), [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#), and [other safety monitoring systems](#).

Learn more about [developing COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Benefits

Why should I get vaccinated if I might get COVID-19 anyway?

COVID-19 vaccines are [working well](#) to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Compared to people who are [up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccinations, unvaccinated people are [more likely](#) to get COVID-19, much more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19, and much more likely to die from COVID-19.

After Your Vaccine

How can I get a new CDC COVID-19 Vaccination card? ^

CDC no longer distributes the white CDC COVID-19 Vaccination cards and does **not** maintain vaccination records.

Contact your state health department's [immunization information system \(IIS\)](#). Your state's IIS cannot issue you a vaccination card, but they can provide a digital or paper copy of [your full vaccination record](#), including your COVID-19 vaccinations.

I was vaccinated in another country. How do I transfer my proof of vaccination from that country to get a proof of vaccination card in the United States? ^

There are several ways you can update your records with vaccines you received while outside the United States.

Learn more about [Vaccination Received Outside the United States](#).

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