



# COVID-19 VACCINE

Vaccination against COVID-19 is one of the best ways to help stop the coronavirus pandemic. Supplies will increase over time, and the vaccine should be available to the general public later in 2021. (Please note that the COVID-19 vaccine may not be available for young children until more studies are completed.)

In the meantime, we ask that you continue to wear your mask, limit indoor gatherings, practice social distancing, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds and stay home when you're sick.

If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, we recommend visiting our website at the below link, contacting your healthcare provider and relying on other fact-based sources like the CDC and FDA.

[unitypoint.org/covid-19-vaccine](https://unitypoint.org/covid-19-vaccine)





# COVID-19 VACCINE FAQs

## What are some of the potential side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Side effects are common, but generally mild to moderate and occur within the first few days of getting the vaccine. For more information on vaccine safety, speed of development and potential side effects of vaccination, we recommend reading the [Pfizer Fact Sheet](#), [Moderna Fact Sheet](#) and [Johnson & Johnson/Janssen Fact Sheet](#). Both materials were created by the FDA and include the latest information.

## What are the ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccine?

There are currently three COVID-19 vaccines with Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) approval by the FDA: Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson/Janssen. Ingredients for the Pfizer Vaccine may be found on the [Fact Sheet](#). Ingredients for the Moderna Vaccine can be found on the [Fact Sheet](#). Ingredients for the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen Vaccine can be found on the [Fact Sheet](#).

## How do I know the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, since it was just developed?

Since COVID-19 is a new virus, we understand you may have questions about COVID-19 vaccine safety. It's important to note that the FDA established rigorous safety requirements for these vaccines, and tens of thousands of individuals participated in the clinical trials. Even though the virus itself is new, the science behind the vaccines is not new—it is rooted in years of research, and every step of the vaccine process went through the same safety assessments as all other vaccines. Finally, we want our community to know that our clinical leaders and vaccine and infectious disease experts thoroughly reviewed all data surrounding the clinical trials of these vaccines, and they support vaccination to help stop the pandemic. For more information on vaccine safety, we recommend visiting the [CDC website](#).

## Should I get the vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?

Yes. If you've already had COVID-19, your body may have built up antibodies to fight future infection. We know that natural infection results in immunity lasting at least 90 days, but we do not yet know how long that immunity lasts. Because of natural immunity, individuals who have had COVID-19 can consider deferring vaccination for 90 days, particularly in times of vaccine shortage. However, it is safe and effective to get the vaccine sooner, as long as your active infection and isolation period has ended.

## Will I need a second dose of COVID-19 vaccine?

Johson & Johnson/Janssen is one dose. Pfizer and Moderna are two doses. The Pfizer vaccine requires a second dose at least 21 days after your first dose, and the Moderna vaccine requires a second dose at least 28 days after your first dose. These are the intervals utilized in the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine studies, so receiving your second dose close to the 21- or 28-day timeframe is advised.

The CDC states you can schedule the second dose up to six weeks after the first dose for both Pfizer and Moderna and still receive the full benefit of the vaccine. If your second dose is given outside of that six-week window, there is no need to restart the series. The second dose should be the same brand as the initial dose as there is not data to support interchanging brands. You will not be able to schedule your second dose appointment any sooner than the 21- or 28-day intervals.

## Should someone with allergies get the COVID-19 vaccine?

If you have severe anaphylaxis or an allergy to one of the ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccine, please talk to your health care provider. For most people, even those with seasonal allergies or minor food allergies, it is safe, and we highly recommend getting the vaccine.

## Can pregnant or nursing individuals receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, pregnant and nursing individuals are eligible to receive the vaccine. They were excluded from the clinical trials in the development of these vaccines, so no information has been collected regarding safety during pregnancy. However, our Women's Service Line supports the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in the position the vaccine should be offered to pregnant and lactating individuals.

It is important to know that being pregnant puts a woman at increased risk of more severe COVID-19 with an increase in ICU admission and ventilator use when compared to non-pregnant women in the same age group. The bottom line - it's a personal decision, so we recommend pregnant individuals contact their provider to discuss their individual situation.

## Will people need to wear a mask after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

After receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, it's still important to follow the same guidelines: wear a mask, social distance, wash your hands and stay home when you're sick. We recognize our communities are eager to return to "normal." However, we don't yet know how long immunity from the vaccine will last, and it will take time to vaccinate a large percentage of our communities to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

## Contact your health care provider if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

