

# COVID-19 Myths and Facts



COVID-19 vaccination is safe\* and highly effective at preventing COVID-19. Here are common myths and facts about the vaccines.

**Myth: COVID-19 vaccines were developed too quickly. They aren't safe.**

**Fact:** The COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for public use have been proven safe and effective. They have gone through the same strict laboratory testing and large clinical trials as other vaccines including the flu shot, the tetanus vaccine, and the polio vaccine. Independent experts have carefully reviewed all the data to help ensure that the vaccines have met the necessary safety standards. For additional information, you can read about the [vaccines' development and authorization](#) process, or find out [what medical experts are saying](#) about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

**Myth: The vaccines were only given Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), so they have not been through typical extended testing.**

**Fact:** The current FDA-authorized vaccines went through a full testing and review process, but at an accelerated pace due to the public health emergency of the pandemic. This included three phases of clinical trials, involving tens of thousands of volunteers to test vaccine effectiveness and safety. Any new vaccine goes through this same testing protocol. After testing, manufacturers must submit adequate clinical, nonclinical, and manufacturing data gained from the development and testing process for review. Then, FDA scientists, as well as independent scientific and public health experts, review the data to determine whether the potential benefits of a product outweigh the potential risks. As vaccines are administered outside of a clinical trial environment, scientists and doctors look carefully at all reported side effects, and use the systems that are in place to ensure the available vaccines are safe.

**Myth: The side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines are severe.**

**Fact:** There is a possibility of moderate side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines, including tiredness, chills, or a fever. You may also experience pain and redness at the vaccination site. These side effects are expected and may last anywhere from a few days to a week. They do not mean you have COVID-19 — they are normal signs that your body is building immunity. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized vaccines do not give you COVID-19.



**Myth: I should wait for more information about how the vaccines work against the new variants of COVID-19.**

**Fact:** The available data suggests the vaccines authorized by the FDA are at least partially effective against COVID-19 variants because they trigger a broad and robust immune response.

**Myth: The vaccines can infect me with COVID-19.**

**Fact:** The vaccines cannot make you sick with COVID-19 because they do not contain the virus that causes COVID-19. You may experience side effects, such as a fever, chills, or fatigue after the vaccination. This is normal. It means your body is responding to the vaccine by making antibodies, but it does not mean you have COVID-19.

**Myth: I already had COVID-19, so I do not need to be vaccinated.**

**Fact:** While previous COVID-19 infection may provide a degree of protection against reinfection, it is unknown how long that protection lasts. While research is still being done, vaccination may provide longer lasting protection against COVID-19, in addition to at least partial protection against new COVID-19 variants.

**Myth: I never have to wear a mask or observe social distancing after I am vaccinated.**

**Fact:** Evolving guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) state that fully vaccinated individuals can gather together indoors without wearing masks. They can also gather with unvaccinated individuals from one other household as long as the unvaccinated individuals do not have an increased risk for infection. However, in all other settings you will still need to wear a mask, wash your hands often, and observe physical distancing until we reach herd immunity and the virus stops spreading. Be sure to follow the most recent guidelines from the CDC and your local health authorities.

**Myth: I don't need to be vaccinated because I'm not at risk.**

**Fact:** Being vaccinated will help keep you, your family, and your community healthy and safe. The CDC recommends that as many eligible adults as possible be vaccinated regardless of their infection risk, to help stop the spread and prevent more illnesses and deaths from COVID-19. Everyone needs protection against COVID-19, even young and healthy adults. The more vaccinated people there are, the harder it is for the virus to spread. Also, if you've already had COVID-19, there is no guarantee you will not be infected again. If you are pregnant, have severe allergies, or have concerns about receiving the vaccines, consult your doctor.

**Myth: I can pay to be on a priority list to be vaccinated.**

**Fact:** You cannot pay to be placed on a priority list for the vaccines. At this time, the order of distribution in most areas is based on your risk for infection. If someone asks you for payment in exchange for being put on a vaccines priority list, you are likely the target of a vaccines scam. [Learn more about vaccines scams](#) and how to report them to authorities.

**Myth: The vaccines contain questionable substances.**

**Fact:** The FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines do not contain fetal tissue, implants, microchips, tracking devices, or anything that could change your DNA. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines contain mRNA, which triggers the making of antibodies and then breaks down. Visit the [CDC website](#) to learn more.



**Myth: You can still be infected after vaccination, which proves vaccines don't work.**

**Fact:** While the COVID-19 vaccines are extremely effective at preventing infection, it's true there is still a small risk of infection. However, if you become infected with COVID-19 after being vaccinated, the vaccines can still help by lessening the severity of symptoms. Less severe symptoms among infected people will mean fewer hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19.

**Stay informed**

It's important to know the facts on COVID-19 and the vaccines. You can also visit [vaccinefinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org) to find a vaccination site near you.

Source:

U.S. Food & Drug Administration website: [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Mayo Clinic website: [Mayoclinichealthsystem.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org).

American Medical Association website: [Ama-assn.org](https://www.ama-assn.org).

\*Please visit the [CDC's website](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, including information about a very small number of reports involving a rare and severe type of blood clot in people who have received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. No one has reported similar blood clotting events associated with the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. If you have questions about COVID-19 vaccines, please talk to your doctor.

