



# COVID-19 Vaccine Information\*

## **Q: Why should I get vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19?**

Currently, COVID-19 has no known cure. Severe COVID infections can result in hospitalization or death, and these more serious cases have occurred in patients of all ages, not just the sick or elderly. Even mild infections can include weeks of uncomfortable symptoms. Also approximately 1/3 of those who get COVID may develop long-term symptoms and/or damage to their lungs or heart, for which there is no cure.

Also, even if you've had a COVID infection already, it is possible to get reinfected with the virus. It is unclear how long immunity from being infected lasts, so everyone should still get vaccinated.

Finally, there are people in our communities that can't get vaccinated due to their age, certain allergies, or other medical reasons. If the rest of us get vaccinated, our "herd immunity" will help protect the most vulnerable.

## **Q: Is there a microchip in the vaccine so the government can track me?**

No. There are no microchips or tracking devices in the vaccines. The government is using a computerized database to show who has been vaccinated and make sure that those who need a second dose get it on time, but no tracking device is placed in or on your body.



## Q: Will I get COVID from the vaccine?

No. None of the currently used COVID-19 vaccinations contain the virus. They only contain instructions for the body to recognize one small part of the virus. None of the vaccines can infect you with COVID or result in a falsely positive COVID test.

*Additional things to think about:*

- It takes approximately two weeks after your final dose of vaccine (or after the single dose Janssen vaccine) to be fully protected, so if you are exposed to COVID before that time, you can still get infected.
- None of the vaccines are 100% effective – that means a small number of people may still get infected with COVID despite being vaccinated. However, any resulting COVID infection should be milder, and the risk of dying from COVID after being vaccinated is nearly zero.

## Q: Can the COVID vaccine cause infertility?

No. There is no scientific evidence that the vaccines affect fertility. However, COVID-19 infection potentially can! There are some small studies showing COVID infection can have an affect on the male reproductive system, reducing sperm counts and motility.

## Q: If the vaccines work so well, why do we still have to wear masks?

Until enough people are vaccinated against COVID, the disease can still spread through our communities, especially in large gatherings in indoor spaces. It's not possible for the average person to know who has been vaccinated, and we are still below the number of vaccinations needed for "herd immunity" to provide protection. Wearing masks helps us to keep the spread of COVID down until more people are protected.



## **Q: Is the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine effective?**

Yes. In studies, the Janssen vaccine was shown to be 72% effective in preventing moderate COVID-19 disease in the United States, 85% effective in preventing severe COVID-19 disease, and 100% effective in preventing death from COVID-19.

## **Q: Why did the FDA and CDC “pause” giving the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine?**

The Janssen vaccine was “paused” due to six cases of a rare and serious type of blood clot that occurred along with a low platelet count (a condition called thrombocytopenia). Since there seemed to be a pattern to the cases, they wanted the chance to investigate further before more people received the vaccine. Also, the particular type of blood clot in these cases is treated differently than more common blood clots, so the FDA and CDC wanted to make sure that healthcare providers were aware of this if further cases were to occur. These cases were primarily in women aged 18 to 49.

They decided to resume the vaccination after determining that this side effect was extremely rare – 15 cases found in nearly 8 million doses of vaccine given is only 0.0002%! In comparison, the risk of getting blood clots from actual COVID infection is more than 100 times higher.

Basically, the risks of NOT getting vaccinated against COVID are much worse than any known risk of the vaccine. Women under age 50 may choose to get a different vaccine instead.



## Q: Will I have to get another COVID vaccine later?

So far, the immunity from Pfizer and Moderna vaccines has been shown to last AT LEAST six months, likely longer, and it will continue to be monitored in those who received the vaccine in the studies. The Janssen vaccine has not been around that long yet but is also being monitored.

The development of new mutations, or variations, in the COVID virus can also affect how long the vaccines are effective for. It is possible that booster shots may be needed at some point in the future, but no one knows for sure yet.

What we DO know is that the longer the virus continues to circulate in our communities, the more likely it is that new mutations will occur. So, it's important that as many people as possible get vaccinated as quickly as possible to reduce the virus's ability to mutate and change and reduce the likelihood that we will need more vaccinations.



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