

# COVID-19 Vaccine Basics

## COVID-19 vaccines are safe and work

A vaccine is designed to prevent diseases. COVID-19 vaccines tell your body how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines cannot give you COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines help protect you from COVID-19 disease. If you do get sick with COVID-19 after being vaccinated, it is less likely that you will get very sick or have to go to the hospital. **Everyone age 6 months and older should get vaccinated, especially if you are under 2 years of age, at risk for severe disease, have a weakened immune system, are pregnant, or 65 years of age and older.**

**The COVID-19 vaccines were carefully tested in a diverse group before being authorized or licensed.** Tens of thousands of Black, Latinx, American Indian, and Asian people participated in the Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax vaccine studies. We know that these communities, along with our disability and LGBTQ+ communities, are often excluded from the benefits of medicine and experience ongoing and historical racism, medical trauma, and abuse. These factors worsen the impact of COVID-19 for these communities and emphasize the importance that the vaccine works and is safe for all.

No safety steps were skipped in the making of the COVID-19 vaccines. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) required safety data for the vaccines to be authorized or licensed. Additionally, medical researchers continue to monitor the vaccines for safety.

## Available vaccines

At this time, there are four different 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccines available: Comirnaty (Pfizer), Spikevax and mNEXSPIKE (Moderna), and Nuvaxovid (Novavax). Each vaccine helps protect people from getting very sick with COVID-19. Not all vaccination locations will have each vaccine available. The most important thing is not to miss an opportunity to get vaccinated. For more information on the vaccines, visit [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: COVID-19: The Disease & Vaccines \(www.chop.edu/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-details/covid-19-vaccine\)](http://www.chop.edu/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-details/covid-19-vaccine).

## What to expect when you get the vaccine

- People trained to give the vaccine will tell you about the process, discuss any potential risks or side effects, and answer questions.
- The vaccine and number of dose(s) you receive depends on your age, vaccine, previous COVID-19 vaccines received, and if you are immunocompromised.
- You may be monitored after you get the vaccine for any serious side effects.

## Side effects

Some people have side effects after getting the vaccine. Side effects usually last one or two days and usually do not prevent you from daily activities. You may have:

- A sore arm
- Muscle aches

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Fever/chills

If you have serious side effects, go to a hospital, or call 911.

## The vaccine does not contain

- Preservatives
- Pork products or gelatin
- Egg
- COVID-19 live virus

## Why should you get the COVID-19 vaccine?

- **Protect yourself** from severe COVID-19 and long-term impacts of COVID-19.
- **Support your community.** Protect those who cannot be vaccinated (very young children) or do not respond well to vaccination (those with weakened immune systems).

## How to get vaccinated

- Check with your health care provider about appointments.
- Contact providers or pharmacies near you, including pediatric and family medicine clinics, primary care providers, federally qualified health centers, local public health agencies, tribal health agencies, community sites and clinics, and Indian Health Service locations.

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[www.health.state.mn.us/immunize](http://www.health.state.mn.us/immunize)

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-5414.*