The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective

The COVID-19 vaccine is a vital tool to help end the pandemic. Due to the fast arrival of the vaccine, there's been a lot of conflicting information about its safety and effectiveness. It's OK if you have questions. Here's fact-based information from our medical experts and doctors.

Vaccine safety and effectiveness

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective?

Yes. The COVID-19 vaccine went through rigorous clinical trials to prove it's safe and effective to use. The clinical trials included people 16+ of all genders, races, and ethnicities. The vaccine was found to be effective and safe for all participants. The COVID-19 vaccine is held to the exact same safety standards as any other vaccine.

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine?

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 95% effective at preventing COVID-19, and the Moderna vaccine is 94.1% effective, according to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) data. In addition, Johnson & Johnson has applied for emergency use authorization for a single-dose vaccine. We'll have more information about this vaccine once the data has been shared and reviewed as part

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of the approval process. However, initial reports pending review suggest that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may be as effective in preventing serious illness.

How was the COVID-19 vaccine developed so quickly?

Researchers began developing a vaccine for COVID-19 in January 2020, based on decades of understanding immune response and how vaccines work. The COVID-19 vaccine went through the exact same development process as any other vaccine – only faster. No shortcuts were taken. Due to the serious public health emergency, the common reasons vaccine development takes a long time were removed. For example:

- **Shared research –** To speed up the process, scientists and researchers shared more than 30 years of research on technology and vaccine development with each other.

- **Funding –** Billions of dollars were urgently invested in vaccine development to help stop the rapid spread of COVID-19.

- **Vaccine participants –** Many people wanted to help and volunteered for clinical trials.

- **Rapid results –** Vaccine results could be measured sooner since high numbers of people were getting infected with COVID-19 so quickly.

Due to all these extraordinary efforts and unprecedented circumstances, the COVID-19 vaccine was developed in record time following all the FDA's safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing standards.

Vaccine side effects

What are the potential side effects?

You may experience minor side effects, which are temporary and expected. It's a normal sign that your body is building immunity to the virus. These may include soreness at the injection site, fatigue, fever, muscle aches, headache, and chills. They usually lasts for just a few days after you get the vaccine. Severe allergic reactions can happen, but they are very rare.

Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. None of the approved COVID-19 vaccines or those currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine can't make you sick with COVID-19.

Getting a vaccine

Is there a cost for the vaccine?

No. You should not be charged anything for a COVID-19 vaccination no matter where you get it. In fact, you should be suspicious of any entity that wants to charge you for a vaccine. Vaccine doses were purchased with taxpayer dollars and are required by the federal government to be given at no cost.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory?

No, getting the COVID-19 vaccine is not mandatory. Vaccination is your choice to make, but it's highly recommended. Vaccination is an important, personal choice you can make to protect yourself and the people you love. By choosing to get vaccinated when it's your turn, you can help bring an end to the pandemic.

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