
Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine*

Issued: *December 18, 2020*

We understand that some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated once a COVID-19 vaccine is available in the United States. While these vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority, and there are many reasons to get vaccinated.

Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States use the live virus that causes COVID-19. There are several different types of vaccines in development. However, the goal for each of them is to teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting COVID-19

- COVID-19 vaccines are being carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will be authorized or approved only if they make it substantially less likely you'll get COVID-19.
- Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.
- Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- Experts continue to conduct more studies about the effect of COVID-19 vaccination on severity of illness from COVID-19, as well as its ability to keep people from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.
- COVID-19 can have serious, life-threatening complications, and there is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you.
- Clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines must first show they are safe and effective before any vaccine can be authorized or approved for use. The known and potential benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine must outweigh the known and potential risks of the vaccine for use under what is known as an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).
- Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. But experts don't know how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity. COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by creating an antibody response without having to experience sickness.
- Both natural immunity and immunity produced by a vaccine are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and public health agencies will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

COVID-19 vaccination will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic

- Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed.
 - The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.
 - Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available. As experts learn more about how COVID-19 vaccination may help reduce spread of the disease in communities, public health agencies will continue to update the recommendations to protect communities using the latest science.
-

*Re-printed by permission from Centers for Disease Control (CDC)