

# COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet

Updated November 2024

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. COVID-19 spreads mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

## Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms, ranging from mild to severe illness. Symptoms may vary with new COVID-19 variants and are also dependent on a person's vaccination status. Some people who are infected may not have symptoms.

Common symptoms consist of:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

## Why is it important to get vaccinated?

- COVID-19 vaccines can help reduce the risk of illness from COVID-19 and potential complications.
- Vaccines have been updated to protect against newly circulating variants of the virus that causes COVID-19.
- For people who previously had COVID-19, vaccination can provide added protection and prevent severe outcomes from a COVID-19 infection.
- Vaccination helps protect people by creating an immune response without the potentially severe illness or post-COVID conditions that can be associated with COVID-19 infection.

- Effective at protecting people from getting seriously ill, being hospitalized, and dying.

### Staying up to date:

Vaccine protection decreases over time as new variants circulate, so it is important to stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine. See below:

- Everyone aged 6 months- 4 years should get a 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine.

If your child previously had:	Your child should get:
0 doses (never vaccinated)	2 doses of the 2024–2025 Moderna vaccine OR 3 doses of the 2024–2025 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine
1 or more doses of Moderna vaccine	1 dose of the 2024–2025 Moderna vaccine
1 dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine	2 doses of the 2024–2025 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine
2 or more doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine	1 dose of the 2024–2025 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine

- Children aged 5-11 years are recommended to get 1 updated 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine.
  - 1 dose of the 2024-2025 Moderna, OR 1 dose of the 2024-2025 Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.
- People aged 12 years and older are recommended to get
  - 1 dose of the 2024-2025 Moderna, OR 1 dose of the 2024-2025 Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine OR
  - 1 dose of the 2024–2025 Novavax vaccine **unless** you are receiving a COVID-19 vaccine for the very first time. If you have never received any COVID-19 vaccine and you choose to get Novavax, you need 2 doses of 2024–2025 Novavax COVID-19 vaccine to be up to date.
- It is essential for individuals aged 65 and older, those at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness, and anyone who has never received a COVID-19 vaccine to get the 2024–2025 vaccine.
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should talk to their healthcare provider about additional updated doses.

### Types of vaccines:

- All COVID-19 vaccines prompt our bodies to recognize and help protect us from the virus that causes COVID-19.
- There are two types of COVID-19 vaccines for use in the US: mRNA, and protein subunit vaccines.
- Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines are [mRNA vaccines](#).

- Novavax COVID-19 vaccine are [protein subunit vaccines](#).
  - These vaccines do not use any live virus and cannot cause infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 or other viruses.
- Vaccines do not enter the nucleus of the cell where our DNA is located and cannot change or influence our genes.
  - Vaccine ingredients vary by manufacturer. None of the COVID-19 vaccines contain eggs, gelatin, latex, or preservatives.

For more information on how vaccines work, please visit: [COVID-19 Vaccine Basics](#)

### **Getting your COVID-19 vaccine:**

- Visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/en/> to find different locations near you where you can get the updated COVID-19 vaccine, and other vaccines.
- Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or local/state health department
  - Check your local pharmacy’s website to see if vaccine appointments are available. Some pharmacies may offer walk-in without appointments.
- If you are homebound, it is recommended you contact your healthcare provider, or your local/state health department
  - Additional resources include contact the [Aging Network](#), [Disability Information and Access Line](#), and/or call 1-888-677-1199.
  - For Medicare recipients, call 1-800-633-4227
- Contact the vaccination provider to verify, reschedule, or cancel, or if you have any questions about your appointment.
  - Children, teens, and adults may get a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines at the same time.

For additional resources and guidance on getting your COVID-19 vaccine, please visit: [Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccine | COVID-19 | CDC](#)

### **Side effects can include:**

Side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine can vary from person to person. Others have side effects that affect their ability to do daily activities. Side effects generally go away in a few days and tend to be mild and temporary, like those experienced after routine vaccinations. Even if you don’t experience any side effects, your body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19.

- Pain, swelling, and redness on the arm of vaccine site
- Tiredness, headache, muscle pain
- Chills
- Nausea
- Fever