



Vaccine FAQ's

Q: I've heard most people are not at risk for severe disease or death from COVID-19, so why should I get vaccinated?

A: While you may be low-risk for severe disease or death from COVID-19, many people have long-term problems from COVID-19 like lung, heart and nerve problems and there could be other effects that become apparent in the future. Also, once you're fully vaccinated you don't have to quarantine after a COVID-19 exposure unless you develop symptoms.

Q: How do I get a vaccine?

A: Visit **WorthAShot.org** for details on the Department of Health's site and to schedule an appointment. Details on vaccine site locations, hours and walk-in appointment availability will be updated on that site regularly. You can also visit **OurShot.IN.Gov** or call **211** for information on all available vaccination sites in Indiana.

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

A: No. None of the vaccines approved in the U.S. contain live COVID-19 virus and cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Q: Can I still get COVID-19 if I'm vaccinated?

A: While the vaccines are extremely effective, they are not 100% and some people who are fully vaccinated may still get COVID-19 if exposed to the virus. These are called vaccine breakthrough cases and can occur with any vaccine-preventable disease. However, most breakthrough cases are mild. And the vaccine is still incredibly effective at lessening chances of hospitalization and death in those who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Q: Do I need to get the vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?

A: Yes, you should get vaccinated even if you've already had COVID-19. Experts do not yet know how long natural immunity from the COVID-19 virus lasts. You should get vaccinated as soon as your 10-day isolation period is over and symptoms are gone. You should not get vaccinated while you are still sick or during your isolation period to avoid exposing others. And you should wait 90 days before getting vaccinated if you received monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma during your infection.

Q: Can I choose which vaccine I get?

A: Currently, the Pfizer vaccine is approved for anyone 12 and up, and the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are approved for people age 18 and older at this time. Most vaccine sites do not offer a choice.

Q: If I am under 18, do I have to have my parent with me to get my shots?

A: An adult must accompany you to the vaccination sites, where they will be required to show their ID and confirm your age. A parent or legal guardian is preferred at most sites.

Q: How many shots do I have to get?

A: The Pfizer vaccine requires two doses at least 21 days apart. The Moderna vaccine requires two doses at least 28 days apart. The Johnson & Johnson shot is a single dose. It is not known when we will need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 again, but there may be a booster shot needed in the future.

Q: What are some common side effects?

A: Common side effects are pain, redness or swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and nausea. These side effects are all normal signs your body is building protection against the virus and should go away within a few days.

Q: Will the COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

A: No, COVID-19 vaccines will not change or affect your DNA. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have a very small piece of messenger RNA (mRNA), a type of material that our bodies already use to give the body instructions for making a protein that is found in the COVID-19 virus. Once this protein is made, it triggers the body to make antibodies to fight it. The mRNA never enters the nucleus of our body cells, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is found. The Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine does not contain mRNA.

Q: Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I want to have a baby someday?

A: Yes, there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccinations cause any problems with pregnancy or that fertility problems are a side effect of the vaccination (or any other vaccinations).

Q: When is someone considered fully vaccinated?

A: In general, people are considered fully vaccinated*:

- *2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series such as Pfizer or Moderna, OR*
- *2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's vaccine*

*If you have a compromised immune system due to certain illness or medications, you may not be fully vaccinated even if you meet the criteria above. Please discuss this with your healthcare provider. In these situations, even after vaccination you may need to continue taking all precautions to prevent exposure.

Q: How long does the vaccine protection last?

A: We do not currently know how long protection lasts. Public health experts are working to learn more about immunity and will keep the public informed as more evidence becomes available. In general, it is believed to last at least 6 months with the data currently available.

Q: If I am vaccinated will I still have to quarantine after an exposure?

A: If you meet the criteria listed above for a fully vaccinated individual, and you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, you DO NOT need to quarantine after exposure. The CDC does recommend all asymptomatic, fully vaccinated people identified as close contacts continue to wear a mask while in public during the traditional 14-day quarantine period unless they get tested on days 3-5 of the quarantine period and receive negative test results. If you test negative, you would no longer need to mask for the remaining days of the quarantine period. For example, if you are on the baseball team and a teammate tests positive for COVID-19 and you are identified as a close contact, you can wear a mask and continue going to school, practice and also can continue to work and participate in other public activities as long as you do not have any symptoms.

Q: Are there other benefits from getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: You can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic. But to reduce the risk of being infected with the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others, the CDC is recommending everyone continue to wear a mask indoors in public spaces in areas of high transmission regardless of vaccination status.

Q: How much does the vaccine cost and what if I don't have insurance?

A: The vaccine is FREE to anyone living in the U.S., regardless of immigration or health insurance status. If you have health insurance, that information will be collected at the time of your appointment to help cover administration costs of the vaccination. But you will not need to pay anything out of pocket at your vaccination and will still be given the vaccine even if you do not have insurance.

Q: How does a COVID-19 vaccine affect my travel plans?

A: If you travel within the United States and are fully vaccinated, you no longer need to be tested before or after travel and would no longer quarantine when you return as long as you are not experiencing COVID-10 symptoms.

If you are traveling to a different country, you need to check the guidance for the areas you will be traveling to, but in general, the following apply:

- You DO NOT need to get tested before leaving the U.S. unless your destination requires it.
- You will still need to show a negative test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before boarding an international flight to the U.S.
- You should still get tested 3-5 days after international travel.
- You no longer need to self-quarantine AFTER arriving in the U.S.