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# COVID VACCINE FACTS

## COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you, and our residents, from getting COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines will be approved only if they make it significantly less likely you'll get COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help prevent you from getting dangerously ill even if you do get the virus.

Getting yourself vaccinated will help protect the people around you from getting COVID-19 too, especially the residents we care for and our elderly family and friends.

## COVID-19 vaccination will be a safer way to help build protection

COVID-19 can have life-threatening complications and there is no way to predict how it might affect you. If you get sick, you could spread the disease to others near you, including the residents you care for. Getting infected with COVID-19 may offer some natural immunity, but experts don't know how long this protection lasts. The risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs the unknown benefits of natural immunity. COVID-19 vaccination can help protect you by creating an immune response without the risks of the actual sickness.

## COVID-19 vaccination will be a critical tool to help stop the pandemic and save lives

Masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to the residents we care for, but these measures are not enough. We have witnessed this as we've seen aggressive and devastating transmission throughout our nursing facilities despite our strict PPE requirements. We've also experienced the financial hardships caused by illness, weeks of quarantine, and lost work. Vaccines act as an internal shield and work with your immune system to enable you to fight the virus if you are exposed. Achieving broad immunity to COVID-19 is the master key to shutting down transmission of the virus and ending the pandemic.

## COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19 disease

None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States use the live virus that causes COVID-19. Vaccines cleverly teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the viruses that cause diseases, such as COVID-19. Sometimes the vaccination process can cause symptoms such as fatigue or fever. These symptoms are a normal sign our body is building the needed immunity.

It can take up to a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. It is possible a person could be exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. This is because the body has not had enough time to build up its protection.

## COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests

Vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States won't cause you to test positive on viral tests, which determine if you have a current infection. It is possible that you may test positive on an antibody test after receiving a vaccination. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts continue to study how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

## People who have recovered from COVID-19 may still benefit from getting vaccinated

Due to the serious dangers associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 has been documented, people may be advised to get a vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before.

The natural immunity someone gains from having an infection varies from person to person. Early evidence suggests natural immunity to COVID-19 may not last very long.

## Receiving an mRNA vaccine will not alter your DNA

The first COVID-19 vaccines we are likely to see have been produced with mRNA technology. mRNA stands for messenger ribonucleic acid and can be described as a cell's instructions for how to make a protein. mRNA is not able to change a person's DNA. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA are kept. This means the mRNA does not affect our DNA in any way. COVID-19 vaccines that use mRNA work inside the body to make proteins that help us safely develop immunity to disease.

## There are many COVID-19 vaccines in clinical trials

Currently, many clinical trials are evaluating investigational COVID-19 vaccines in thousands of study participants. These trials generate scientific data for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to determine a vaccine's safety and effectiveness. These clinical trials are being conducted according to very tight standards set forth by the FDA. Two leading vaccine candidates using mRNA technology are in late stage clinical trials. These vaccine manufacturers have achieved the safety standards required by the FDA and have applied for Emergency Use Authorization.

Pfizer

***Pfizer has announced that their vaccine candidate has demonstrated to be 95% effective in preventing COVID-19 infection.***

*Pfizer studied 43,000 trial participants. During the trial, 170 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were identified. Of those cases, 8 study participants who received the trial vaccine developed COVID-19 disease. The remaining 162 were noted in the placebo group. The placebo group patients did not receive the vaccine.*

*No participants in the Pfizer trial have experienced any serious safety concerns. The most common adverse events experienced by Pfizer's vaccine recipients were fatigue (3.8%) and headache (2.0%).*

moderna

***Moderna has announced that their vaccine candidate has demonstrated to be 94.1% effective in preventing COVID-19 infection.***

*Moderna studied 30,000 trial participants. 196 total cases of COVID-19 infection were reported. 11 of these cases were observed among the group of participants who received the trial vaccine, and none of these cases progressed to severe illness. The remaining 185 cases were reported among the placebo group who did not receive the vaccine.*

*The most common reported adverse reactions reported by Moderna's participants included fatigue, muscle aches, joint pain, headache, and pain/redness at the injection site. No serious safety concerns were reported.*

For comparison, while vaccine efficacy can vary from year to year, studies show that current flu vaccines are generally 40-60% effective.

The above efficacy and adverse reaction data from Pfizer and Moderna is based off preliminary information shared with the FDA and the CDC. Much more detailed information is anticipated in the coming weeks.


***References:***

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