WHAT TO EXPECT

Vaccines are one of the most important tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

To stop this pandemic, we need to use all of our prevention tools. Vaccination is one of the most effective tools to protect health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your natural defenses to prepare your body to fight the virus if you are exposed (also called immunity.) You must still take additional steps to help stop the spread of COVID-19, including wearing a mask, washing your hands frequently and staying home when sick.

Studies show that vaccines are effective at keeping you from contracting COVID-19. Experts also believe the vaccine may keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. The vaccines cannot give you the actual disease.

The vaccines are safe. The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All the COVID-19 vaccines in use have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as other vaccines produced in the

U.S. over time. A system is in place across the country that allows the CDC to monitor and make sure the vaccines stay safe.

So far 4 different types of COVID-19 vaccines are available in the U.S.
The Pfizer-BioNTech and Novavax vaccines require 2 doses given at least 21 days apart. The Moderna vaccine requires 2 doses given at least 28 days apart. Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine requires a single primary dose shot.

The vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, fatigue, or mild fever. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 in case you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will not last longer than a day or two. Having these types of side effects does NOT mean that you have COVID-19. If you have questions about your health after your shot, call your doctor or health clinic. As with any medicine, it is rare but possible to have a serious reaction, such as not being able to breathe. It is very unlikely that this will happen, but if it does, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency room.
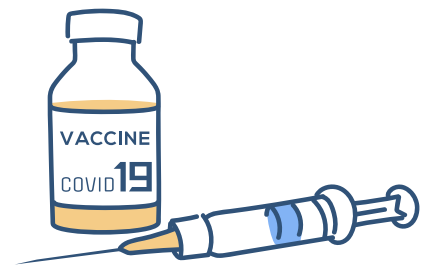
When you get the vaccine, you and your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks.
The CDC recommends that during the pandemic, we all wear masks that cover our nose and mouth when in contact with others outside our own household, when in healthcare facilities, and when receiving a vaccine, including a COVID-19 vaccine.

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Even after you get your vaccine, you will should keep wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth, washing your hands often, and staying home when sick. This gives you and others the best protection from catching the virus. Experts don't yet know how long the vaccine will protect you, so it's a good idea to continue following the guidelines from the CDC and state health department.