

COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

How is it decided who is a priority for the vaccine?

Maine CDC controls the vaccination plan for Maine's population. At this time, plan identifies four phases since there will be a limited number of COVID-19 vaccine doses available.

Where will the vaccine be administered?

This will vary based on where you schedule your vaccine. It is very important that you get both your initial shot and booster at the location noted to ensure both timeliness and that you are getting the same vaccine.

Which vaccine will I get, and can I choose?

With the current, limited supplies people are unable to choose which vaccine they get. The vaccines that have been approved have similar effectivity and mild side effects for most people.

What do we know about the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine products?

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use a messenger RNA (mRNA) delivery system. Reverse engineered manufactured mRNA after being injected into the body causes cells to make a single protein structure of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This causes an immune response to that protein structure. [The CDC has a lot of great information about the vaccines, and we recommend visiting their website if you want to learn more.](#)

Does the mRNA portion of the vaccine affect my DNA or stay in my body?

No. While mRNA vaccines are new for use in humans, the mRNA in the vaccine is degraded quickly by normal cellular processes and does not enter the nucleus of the cell.

Can I contract COVID-19 from the vaccine itself?

No. The vaccines only contain engineered mRNA and no components of the actual virus.

How do I learn more about the vaccines?

We recommend visiting the [CDC website](#) for more information about the COVID-19 vaccines.

How do we know that these vaccines are safe when they are so new?

COVID-19 vaccines are being tested in large clinical trials to assess their safety. However, it does take time, and more people getting vaccinated before we learn about very rare or long-term side effects. That is why safety monitoring will continue.

Will there be enough vaccine for everyone?

The federal government has invested in select vaccine manufacturers to help increase their ability to quickly make and distribute a large amount of COVID-19 vaccine. This will allow the United States to continually increase the supply in the weeks and months to come.

Do I need to wear a mask when I receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

There is not enough information yet to say if or for how long after infection someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again with natural immunity. Early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last long, but more studies are needed to better understand this.

I saw a story about people having allergic reactions to the vaccine. How can I be sure this won't happen to me?

Currently, there are no reports of increased incidence of allergic reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine relative to other vaccinations. However, if you are allergic to any component of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, you should not receive it. Staff at the immunization clinics are trained and equipped to respond to any allergic reactions that may occur. If you have had prior severe allergic reactions, please alert staff at the vaccine clinic prior to administration of the vaccine and that you wait on site for a minimum of 30 minutes after receiving the vaccine.

I felt sick after the first dose, should I still get the second dose?

In most cases yes, Flu-like symptoms, including fever (even high fevers), chills, fatigue, and body aches are the signs that your immune system is reacting to the vaccine and creating protective antibodies.

- If you experienced a *severe* allergic reaction to the first dose you should not receive the second dose.
- If you experienced *severe* side-effects, resulting in hospitalization or emergency room treatment, you should consult with your healthcare provider before receiving the second dose.

What if I want to wait until another vaccine is available?

Due to the current, limited supplies this is not recommended. We do not know when there will be adequate supply to allow people to choose their vaccine type.

Can people under age 18 get vaccinated?

- People 16 and over can receive the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine with parental consent
- People 18 and over can receive the Moderna vaccine
- Pfizer/BioNtech is currently running trials for children 12 and up
- At this time there is no information about a vaccine for children under the age of 12

I am pregnant or breastfeeding, can I get vaccinated?

Please consult with your primary care provider.

I am immunocompromised from a medication that I take/from a condition, can I take the vaccine?

Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is safe for you to take. If you have a compromised immune system the vaccine may be less effective, but it should not create additional side effects.

I have a severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to the COVID-19 vaccine components, should I get a vaccine?

No. People with a known anaphylactic reaction to any ingredient of the mRNA vaccine should **NOT** receive the vaccine at this time. The vaccine ingredient list is on the CDC website.

If have a severe allergy to food, pets, medication, or other vaccines, can I still get a vaccine?

Yes, but you should stay for observation for a minimum of 30 minutes after receiving the vaccine.

I have an allergy to eggs or latex; can I still receive the vaccine?

Yes, the vaccine does not contain eggs or latex.

It looks like the vaccine works after one dose; do I need a second dose?

Yes. The vaccine starts providing protection against symptomatic COVID-19 after the first dose, but full protection against COVID-19 requires both doses.

I missed my appointment for my second dose, do I need to restart the series?

Please make every effort to get your second dose at the scheduled time. If you miss the second dose you should reschedule as soon as possible. You will not need to repeat the first dose.

I got the first dose of the vaccine and now have a positive COVID-19 test, do I still need to get the second dose?

Yes, it is unclear how long immunity from COVID-19 infection lasts. Once you are no longer symptomatic and out of the quarantine period, you should receive your second dose.

Does the COVID-19 vaccination prevent the spread of COVID-19 or prevent me from getting COVID-19?

We know that people who received the COVID-19 vaccine rarely developed symptoms of COVID-19. If they do get symptoms, it may be less severe. But we do not yet know if people who receive the vaccine can still transmit or carry the virus, studies are ongoing.