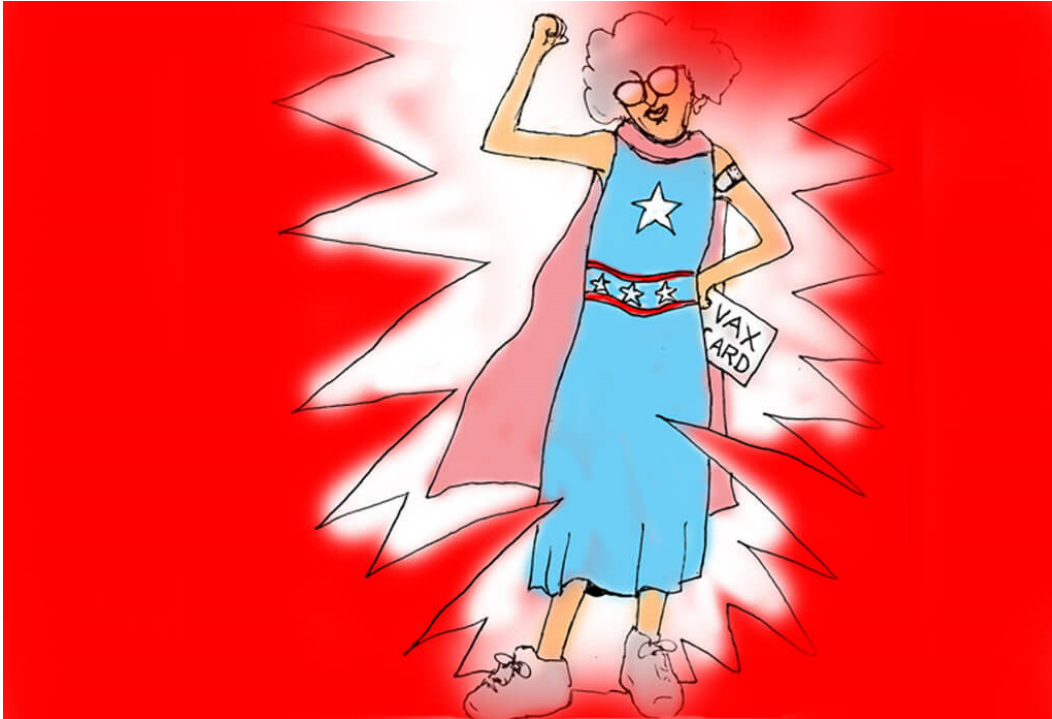


Be a hero: Get vaccinated against COVID-19



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It's now your turn to be the hero.

A year ago, we were a month into the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. While it was still new, we were already frayed, tired and quite frankly scared. We were still navigating what this pandemic would mean and how long it would be with us.

So many of you shared kind notes and other gestures of encouragement to let us know you were behind us for the long haul. You called us heroes – something that many of us are still getting used to. We continue to be so grateful for your unwavering support. Now, a year later, it's your turn.

You are now the heroes on the frontlines of this fight. It is in your hands to end this pandemic. Those of us who have stood on the frontlines caring for our sickest patients and feeling helpless as lives are lost are asking you for the ultimate show of support: get vaccinated. It's safe. It's effective. It may save your life or the life of a loved one. For those who need [a bit of convincing](#), please read on.

According to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention statistics, COVID-19 had [killed](#) more than 530,000 people nationwide, a number that continues to rise. In turn, the CDC has [not found evidence](#) of deaths directly associated with the COVID-19 vaccine from available clinical information. Severe reaction, such as anaphylaxis, is also extremely rare only occurring in two to five people per million vaccinated [according to](#) the national Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System.

But, is it effective? In clinical trials, researchers measured how well each vaccine would prevent illness in a controlled setting and while this process was prioritized, it was not rushed. All necessary steps were taken, and the data has been impressive. The vaccinations currently available have been shown to be extremely effective. Now, these vaccines continue to be monitored in the real world with amazing results.

In [a report](#) released by the CDC one month after vaccinations began, the following was shared, "After administration of 13.8 million doses of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to the U.S. population during the first month of the vaccination program, the post-authorization safety profiles for both vaccines are reassuring."

While there is a chance that you may still get the COVID-19 virus after being vaccinated, I can say with certainty that for those who have been vaccinated, the likelihood of [hospitalization](#) due to the virus is near zero as [no cases have been reported](#) by the Food and Drug Administration or other public agency. In turn, for those who are not vaccinated, you are [putting yourself at high risk](#) as well as unvaccinated individuals around you, no matter your age. For instance, someone in their 30s has a 10-times higher risk of being hospitalized than someone age 5-17 and a 45 times higher rate of death.

But what about the side effects? Yes, you may experience temporary discomfort. For most, it may be a sore arm from the injection, sometimes short-term fatigue, aches, chills, or mild fever.

It's certainly no fun to not feel your best but consider this as your body's way of telling you it's doing its job. Some newly vaccinated have welcomed these symptoms as a sign of hope!

While I could share lots of additional evidence backing the safety and efficacy of vaccinations, I recommend that you speak directly with your healthcare provider about your questions or concerns.

In all, I think we can all agree we want to get back out there without having to grab our masks. We want to see each other's smiles and hug our loved ones. But this won't happen unless we all do our part and get the vaccine when it is our turn.

So, quite simply, on behalf of our frontline workers: Be our hero. Get vaccinated.