# Topic: Getting Vaccinated: What to Expect At and After Your Appointment

## Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccine

### At your vaccination appointment

* **Before you arrive, contact the site where you will be vaccinated or review your appointment confirmation email** for details about what identification and proof of eligibility you may need to bring to your vaccination appointment.
* **When you get a vaccine, you and your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks that cover your nose and mouth.** Stay 6 feet away from others while inside and in lines. [Learn more about protecting yourself when going to get your COVID-19 vaccine](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/doctor-visits-medicine.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/doctor-visits-medicine.html.
* **You should receive a paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you are being offered.** Each authorized COVID-19 vaccine has its own fact sheet that contains information to help you understand the risks and benefits of receiving that specific vaccine. [Learn more about different COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html.
* **After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, you should be monitored on site for at least 15 minutes.** [Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html.
* **At your vaccination appointment, ask your vaccination provider about getting started with v-safe**, a free, smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. V-safe also reminds you to get your second dose if you need one. [Learn more about v-safe](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html.
* **You should receive a vaccination card that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received,** the date you received it, and where you received it. Keep your vaccination card in case you need it for future use. [Learn more about how to find your vaccination record](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/immuniz-records.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/immuniz-records.html.
* **If you do not receive a COVID-19 vaccination card at your appointment**, contact the vaccination provider site where you got vaccinated or your state health department to find out how you can get a card.

### Don’t get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines

Wait at least 14 days before getting any other vaccine, including a flu or shingles vaccine. if you have recently received any other vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccine.

However, if you get a COVID-19 vaccine within 14 days of another vaccine, you do not need to be revaccinated with either vaccine. You should still complete both vaccine series on schedule.

When we have more data on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines given at the same time as other vaccines, CDC may update this recommendation.

### If you need a second shot

If you receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine or [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Moderna.html)), you will need 2 shots to be fully protected. You should get your second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get it.

If you receive the viral vector COVID-19 vaccine, Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine, you will only need 1 shot.

## Possible Side Effects After Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects.

### Common side effects

On the arm where you got the shot:

* Pain
* Redness
* Swelling

Throughout the rest of your body:

* Tiredness
* Headache
* Muscle pain
* Chills
* Fever
* Nausea

### Helpful tips

**Talk to your doctor about taking over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, aspirin, or antihistamines, for any pain and discomfort you may experience after getting vaccinated.** You can take these medications to relieve post-vaccination side effects if you have no other medical reasons that prevent you from taking these medications normally.

It is not recommended you take these medicines before vaccination for the purpose of trying to prevent side effects.

To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot:

* Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
* Use or exercise your arm.

To reduce discomfort from fever:

* Drink plenty of fluids.
* Dress lightly

### If you received a second shot

**Side effects after your second shot may be more intense than the ones you experienced after your first shot.** These side effects are normal signs that your body is building protection and should go away within a few days.

### When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

• If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours

• If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site, seek immediate medical care by calling 911. [Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/allergic-reaction.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/allergic-reaction.html.

J**ohnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine**: CDC and FDA have recommended that use of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine resume in the United States, effective April 23, 2021. However, women younger than 50 years old especially should be aware of the rare risk of blood clots with low platelets after vaccination, and that other COVID-19 vaccines are available where this risk has not been seen. If you received a J&J/Janssen vaccine, [here is updated information on the J&J vaccine](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/JJUpdate.html#symptoms-list-question.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/JJUpdate.html#symptoms-list-question.html

[Read the CDC/FDA statement](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html) at https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html

## Updated information on Johnson & Johnson /Janssen Vaccine possible adverse event:

* There is a plausible causal relationship between J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine and a rare and serious adverse event—blood clots with low platelets (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome, or TTS). However, after reviewing all available safety data, CDC and FDA recommend use of this vaccine resume in the United States given that the known and potential benefits outweigh the known and potential risks.
* This adverse event is rare, occurring at a rate of about 7 per 1 million vaccinated women between 18 and 49 years old. For women 50 years and older and men of all ages, this adverse event is even more rare.
* For **three weeks after receiving the vaccine**, you should be on the lookout for possible symptoms of a blood clot with low platelets. These include:
  + Severe or persistent headaches or blurred vision
  + Shortness of breath
  + Chest pain
  + Leg swelling
  + Persistent abdominal pain
  + Easy bruising or tiny blood spots under the skin beyond the injection site

**Seek medical care right away if you develop one or more of these symptoms.**

### What to expect after getting a COVID-19 vaccine

* It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination**.** People are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their second dose of the Pfizer-BioNtech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines, or two weeks after the single-dose J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. You should keep using all the tools available to protect yourself and others until you are fully vaccinated
* **After you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you may be able to start doing some things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic**. [Learn more about what you can do when you have been fully vaccinated](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html.) at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html.

## CDC source information

[Your COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect.html)

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect.html

[Possible Side Effects After Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html)

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html

[CDC Recommends Use of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Resume](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/JJUpdate.html#symptoms-list-question.html)

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/JJUpdate.html#symptoms-list-question.html