

# 8 Things You Need to Know About Getting Vaccinated for COVID-19

Updated Dec. 21, 2020 | This information is approved by Medical Staff Serving on the Pandemic Incident Command team at Upland Hills Health in Dodgeville WI: Dr. Charlie Pearce, Dr. Sarah Fox and Dr. Rachel Hartline

## 1) COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. Two doses are needed.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you by creating an antibody response in your body without your having to become sick with COVID-19. Or, if you get COVID-19, the vaccine might keep you from becoming seriously ill or from developing serious complications that may lead to death. [[mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org)]

You need two doses of the currently available COVID-19 vaccine. A second shot 3 weeks after your first shot is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer against this serious disease. [[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)]

## 2) Getting vaccinated may protect people around you from COVID-19.

This is particularly important for people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. [[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)]

## 3) Vaccine DOSES ARE FREE to American people.

The vaccine doses are free. There may be a fee for giving the shot. This fee will likely be covered by your health insurance plan. If you do not have insurance, it may be paid by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund. [[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)]

## 4) Due to limited supplies, not everyone will be able to get a COVID-19 vaccine right away.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) is a U.S. federal advisory group made up of medical and public health experts. The ACIP has recommended that in the first phase of vaccination in the U.S., COVID-19 vaccines be given to health care personnel and adult residents of long-term care facilities. Other groups considered for early COVID-19 vaccination include workers in essential and critical industries, adults at high risk of severe COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions, and adults age 65 and older.

The goal is for everyone to easily get a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as larger quantities are available.

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Not everyone will be able to be vaccinated right away. It is important to continue to protect yourself from COVID-19 until you are vaccinated. Wearing a mask, physical distancing and washing your hands, are things you can do to protect yourself. [\[mayoclinic.org\]](https://www.mayoclinic.org)

## **5) Talk to your physician about individual risks vs. benefits of receiving the vaccine.**

The Pfizer vaccine is approved for anyone over age 16.  
The Moderna vaccine is approved for anyone over age 18.

Those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have other chronic health conditions including a history of anaphylaxis should talk with their physician about their individual risk/benefit of getting the vaccine.

## **6) People who have had COVID-19 should still get vaccinated**

Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity, but experts do not know how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 outweighs any benefits of natural immunity. [\[cdc.gov\]](https://www.cdc.gov)

## **7) Getting vaccinated is safer than getting COVID-19**

Scientists are still learning about the virus that causes COVID-19. The severity of the disease is unpredictable; it has caused serious illness and death for many people. You do not know how sick you will get. If you get sick, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Scientists do not know what the long-term effects from having COVID-19 after you recover. It is not known if getting the disease will protect you from getting it again. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice. [\[cdc.gov\]](https://www.cdc.gov)

## **8) Vaccinated people still need to wear a mask**

It is possible for vaccinated people to carry the virus without developing symptoms and silently transmit the virus. If vaccinated people are silent spreaders of the virus, they may keep it circulating in their communities, putting unvaccinated people at risk. [\[mayoclinic.org\]](https://www.mayoclinic.org)  
[\[New York Times Article\]](#)