

## COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ

**1. What is the difference between SARS CoV-2 and Covid-19?**

SARS-CoV-2 is the name of the virus. COVID-19 is the name of the disease.

**2. What is an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)?**

In an emergency, like a pandemic, it may not be possible to have all the evidence that the FDA would usually have before approving a drug, device, or a test.

When there is a declared emergency, the FDA can make a judgment that it's worth releasing something for use even without all the evidence that would fully establish its effectiveness and safety. If there's evidence that strongly suggests that patients have benefited from a treatment or test, the agency can issue an EUA to make it available.

**3. Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?**

A vaccine must be proven to be safe and effective before it's available to the public. That's what the clinical trial process is for.

The COVID-19 vaccines have excellent safety records in clinical trials, where information from tens of thousands of study participants helped the FDA determine the vaccines' safety and effectiveness.

While the COVID-19 vaccines are new, the technology used to develop them—messenger RNA (mRNA) and adenoviruses—has been studied for years. This gave scientists an advantage to quickly develop the COVID-19 vaccines.

**4. Should I get the vaccine if I am immunocompromised?**

Yes, it is strongly recommended that immunocompromised individuals receive a COVID-19 vaccine, as they have a higher risk of severe disease. Since none of the COVID-19 vaccines contain live virus, they are safe for immunocompromised patients.

**5. Since I have a history of serious allergic reactions, should I get the vaccine?**

Rare cases of allergic reactions occur after vaccination. If you have a history of allergy to a component of the vaccine, you can apply for a medical exemption that will be reviewed.

**6. What if I have an anaphylactic reaction?**

To monitor for any immediate reaction, all employees are asked to stay for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine and employees who have a prior history of anaphylaxis (due to any cause) will be monitored for 30 minutes. In the unlikely event of an anaphylactic reaction, onsite teams are prepared with the equipment and supplies to provide immediate care.

## 7. How do the vaccines work?

The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines contain messenger RNA (mRNA), and Johnson & Johnson's vaccine contains an inactivated adenovirus. None of those cause an infection. The mRNA and adenovirus tell the cells to make a harmless copy of the spike protein, which is found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. This teaches the immune system to recognize and fight the real virus. The material in the vaccine does not stay in the body, and it cannot change your DNA.

## 8. Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. The vaccines do not contain a live or weakened version of the virus that causes COVID-19, so the vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

## 9. What's in the COVID-19 vaccine?

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The vaccines also lack some other ingredients that some people may be concerned about. They do not have

- Preservatives, such as thimerosal (which contains an organic form of mercury). Most other vaccines do not use thimerosal or mercury.
- Formaldehyde, which is used to help make some vaccines.
- Eggs, latex, or antibiotics. Some people are allergic to these things.
- Microchips. Scientists are not putting microchips in the vaccines to track us. In fact, it's not even possible to do so.

## 10. After getting the vaccine, can I still transmit and spread the SARS CoV-2 virus?

You will not be fully protected until about two weeks after the second dose of vaccine. During this time, you can still get and transmit the virus. Breakthrough COVID-19 infections with the Delta variant occur in about 1% of vaccinated patients. Recent data show that although these tend to be mild cases, these individuals can transmit the infection to others.

## 11. How long will it take for the vaccine to begin protecting me?

It normally takes about two to three weeks for cellular immunity to develop and several weeks for a full antibody response.

## 12. How long will the vaccine be effective?

The duration of protection from the vaccine is unknown, but is likely to be longer than immunity from having had COVID-19.

**13. How many doses of a COVID-19 vaccine will I need?**

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a single dose, while both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses. The Pfizer vaccine requires a booster 21 days later and the Moderna vaccine requires a second dose 28 days later. The different vaccine products are not to be interchangeable. The second dose must be completed with the same vaccine brand as the first dose. Both doses are important to ensure full protection.

**14. Will the vaccine be effective if the second dose is missed?**

No. The vaccine will not be effective unless both vaccines are administered.

**15. If I get the vaccine, am I entered into a database for tracking purposes?**

If you receive the COVID-19 vaccine, your record of vaccine receipt will be reported, as required, to the Ohio Department of Health's vaccine registry.

**16. What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Many people have experienced side effects common with all vaccines, including

- Soreness or redness at the injection site
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Muscle or joint pain

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has been associated with rare cases of blood clots in women between the ages of 18 to 50 years old. Kettering Health is not offering this vaccine to women in this age range.

Side effects are normal signs that your body is building protection, and the symptoms usually go away within a few days. As a precaution, eligible employees are encouraged to receive the vaccine on a day adjacent to a day off, to better recover from any possible side effects.

**17. What are the long-term side effects of getting the vaccine?**

There have been no significant long-term side effects reported so far, after about 6 months of clinical trials.

**18. Do the vaccine manufacturers have any liability for near- or long-term side effects?**

While the vaccine manufacturers are shielded from liability, there is a federal program called the National Vaccine Injury Program which handles such claims.

**19. Will getting the vaccine end the pandemic?**

The vaccine is a powerful tool in bringing an end to the pandemic. If most people get them, the spread of COVID-19 could drastically shrink. This means we are one giant step closer to getting our lives back to normal.

20. **(UPDATED September 28, 2021)** **If I received my initial series of the COVID-19 vaccine with Pfizer, can I get a booster dose via Kettering Health?**  
Yes. Kettering Health will provide a booster dose of the Pfizer vaccine at any of our COVID-19 vaccination clinics to those who qualify and who completed their initial series at least 6 months ago. The FDA has now given an emergency use authorization for a booster dose of the Pfizer vaccine for those 65 years and older, those who are 18 years and older with underlying medical conditions, those who live in high-risk settings, and those who work in high-risk settings, such as healthcare workers.
21. **(UPDATED September 28, 2021)** **I received the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine series. Can I get a booster of Moderna? Can I get a booster of Pfizer?**  
To date, the FDA has not authorized booster doses of the Moderna vaccine except for immunocompromised individuals. It is not preferred for a booster dose to be given with a different vaccine than the original course. The data shows that the Moderna vaccine's protection is lasting longer than that of the Pfizer vaccine, although all three COVID-19 vaccines (Moderna, Pfizer, J&J) have shown to be effective in preventing hospitalizations and death. At this time, those who received the Moderna vaccine series do not need a booster unless they are immunocompromised.
22. **(UPDATED September 28, 2021)** **I am a healthy healthcare worker who received the Moderna series. Will I ever need a booster dose?**  
This has not yet been determined. Moderna is submitting their data to the FDA for consideration. As noted above, the durability of the protection from the Moderna vaccine seems to be very good, but we do not know how long it will last.
23. **(UPDATED September 28, 2021)** **Are the side effects of a booster dose worse than with the second dose?**  
Data from Pfizer shows that side effects of a booster dose are similar to those of the second dose. The most common side effect is fatigue, followed by headache and muscle pain. Most of these side effects are short-lived and of mild to moderate severity, and they tend to be worse in younger individuals. Moderna has likewise said, based on its clinical trial findings, that the side effects of its booster are similar to those of the second dose.
24. **(UPDATED September 28, 2021)** **Will booster doses be required annually or at some other interval?**  
We do not yet know whether future booster shots or annual shots will be required. This will likely depend on the trajectory of the pandemic, emergence of other variants, and whether COVID-19 becomes an endemic seasonal virus.