

# COVID-19 VACCINE



## MEMBER FAQ DOCUMENT



## Member frequently asked questions

### Why should I get vaccinated?

- COVID-19 continues to spread in Ohio. COVID-19 can cause severe medical complications and lead to death in some people.
- The COVID-19 vaccine may help prevent COVID-19 and decrease the severity of illness in people who catch the virus that causes the disease.

### How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines?

- All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19 after two doses.
- Of the first two vaccines to be granted FDA emergency use authorization, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was 95% effective and the Moderna vaccine was 94% effective in phase 3 clinical trials with more than 70,000 participants between the two studies. Although the COVID-19 vaccines have been developed recently, the technology used in mRNA vaccines, like those developed by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, has been studied for decades.

### When will I be able to receive the vaccine?

- Ohio will follow a phased approach to vaccine administration, with the goal of saving lives. As supply increases, COVID-19 vaccines will be available to all Ohioans who choose to be vaccinated.

**Phase 1: Supply Limited** – Vaccine is available in limited supply and will be available only for specific critical populations. Ohio will focus on vaccinating those most at risk, as well as essential healthcare workers and personnel caring for COVID-19 patients.

**Phase 2: Supply Increasing** – Vaccine availability is increasing and can be offered to a larger group of specific critical populations who choose to be vaccinated.

**Phase 3-4: Widely Available** – Once the vaccine is widely available, Ohio will continue to strategically vaccinate Ohioans if they choose to receive the vaccine.

- The Ohio Department of Health will have regular updates on the phases at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov)

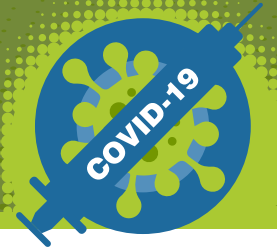
### Can I get COVID-19 infection directly as a result of receiving the vaccine?

- No. The live COVID-19 virus is not present in the mRNA vaccines currently approved for use (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna) and there is no risk of becoming infected as a direct result of receiving the vaccine.

### Are there side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines?

- The most common side effects are very similar to the side effects seen with most vaccines, such as pain or swelling at the injection site, fevers, and tiredness within 72 hours after the vaccine.

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## **If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available?**

- Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether or not you already had COVID-19. While getting the virus does offer natural immunity, it is unknown how long that immunity will last. However, anyone currently infected with COVID-19 should wait to get vaccinated until after their illness has resolved and after they have met the criteria to discontinue isolation.

## **How many doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?**

- Both currently approved vaccines require two doses. If you receive a dose of a particular vaccine, you must receive a second dose of the vaccine from the same manufacturer, as they are not interchangeable.
- The Pfizer vaccine second dose is due 21 days after the first dose, and the Moderna vaccine second dose is due 28 days after the first dose. Both doses are required to provide full protection.

## **How much will the vaccines cost?**

- The COVID-19 vaccine is available at no cost to you.

## **Do I still need to wear a mask and practice social distancing after I receive the vaccine?**

- Yes, you should continue to wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose and practice social distancing after being vaccinated. The vaccine will protect you from getting ill from COVID-19, however, not enough is known about whether you can still carry the virus and spread it to others.

## **How do I know which sources of COVID-19 vaccine information are accurate?**

- It can be difficult to know which sources of information you can trust. The internet, unfortunately, can be filled with dangerous misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines. The best thing you can do is educate yourself about the vaccines with trustworthy information. Learn more about finding credible vaccine information in this article from the CDC at [cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/evalwebs](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/evalwebs)

## **Were minorities or people with high-risk health conditions included in the clinical studies?**

- Yes. The Phase 3 clinical trials for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine (more than 43,000 participants) and Moderna vaccine (more than 30,000 participants) included communities that have historically been under-represented in clinical research and have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Approximately 42% of participants in Pfizer-BioNTech's worldwide clinical trials, and 37% of the Moderna study population were from communities of color, which is similar to the diversity of the U.S. at large. In addition, the clinical studies included participants over age 65 (21% of Pfizer-BioNTech participants; 23% of Moderna participants); and those with high-risk chronic diseases that put them at increased risk of severe COVID-19, such as diabetes, severe obesity, and cardiac disease (46% of Pfizer-BioNTech participants; 42% of Moderna participants).