

COVID-19 Vaccine/Booster Medical FAQs

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Will the vaccine make me sick? Doesn't the vaccine give me COVID?

The COVID-19 vaccine introduces an inactive viral strain into your body. Dead viruses cannot make you sick. Any side effects that you may experience after the vaccine mean your body is working hard to build up an immunity. These effects will go away in a few days, and you may even have no side effects at all. Essentially, vaccines help your body safely develop immunity by imitating, not by causing, an infection.

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Why does every COVID-19 vaccine require multiple doses?

All of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available are inactivated vaccines. Introducing a dead virus into the body is often not enough for the body to achieve complete immunity. The first dose helps the body begin to develop an immunity against the virus. The second dose and booster are necessary to reinforce this immunity. Being "up to date" means having all recommended doses.

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Why do we need a booster?

With some vaccines, though specifically with inactivated vaccines, immunity may begin to wear off over time. This booster dose will allow us to maintain sufficient immunity against the COVID-19 virus.

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Should the booster shot be the same brand as the initial COVID-19 vaccine I received?

Your booster shot does not need to be the same brand as your initial COVID-19 vaccine. For example, if you received the Moderna vaccine, your booster shot can be Pfizer. We will honor your preference.

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Should I get a booster if I just had COVID recently?

If you did not receive monoclonal antibody treatment, it is recommended that you receive a booster dose as soon as you are feeling better after the infection. If you received monoclonal antibody treatment, you should wait 90 days before receiving a booster dose.

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How were the vaccines developed and approved so quickly?

Since the SARS epidemic in 2002-2004, a mRNA vaccine has been in the works. This means, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, scientists were able to rapidly adapt that vaccine "blueprint" to target the COVID-19 virus. Research has shown that the vaccines effectively protect against severe illness and prevent death caused by COVID.

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What are some potential side effects that I might experience?

- Swelling, redness, and pain at injection site
- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Nausea

Remember: The vaccine and booster will affect everyone differently.

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Could side effects be more serious?

In rare cases, people have experienced serious health events after COVID-19 vaccination. Some adverse events are coincidental and are not caused by the vaccine itself.

Blood Clots: The CDC states there is no increased risk for blood clots with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

Myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle): The CDC has reviewed all available data and reports that occurrence is extremely rare.

Courtesy of Illinois Wesleyan University School of Nursing,
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References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). COVID-19 vaccine booster shots. COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>