

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

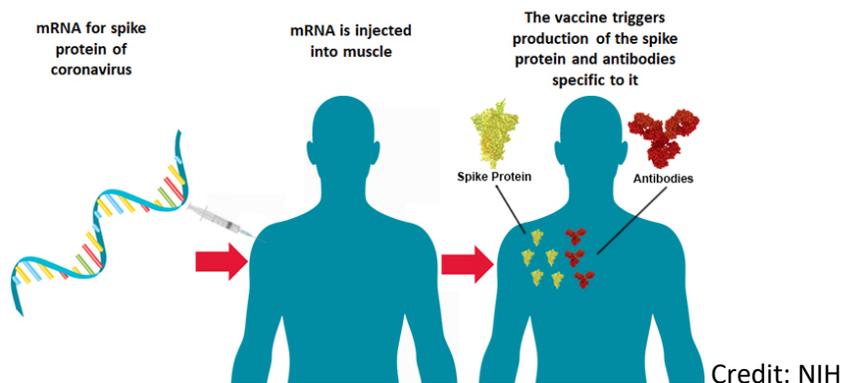
## Should I get the COVID-19 Vaccine?



The COVID-19 pandemic has been a stressful and often frightening time for many people, including those working on the frontlines. The new COVID-19 vaccine is a much anticipated and exciting next step in our fight against COVID-19. It is natural as with any new medication or treatment, that people have questions about it. In the age of social media, it is easy for misinformation to spread quickly, and we want you to have your questions answered accurately and honestly. Here are some common Questions about the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine and answers from Wellforce's Infectious Diseases experts:

### How does the mRNA COVID-19 work?

In the mRNA vaccine the active ingredient (the mRNA) has instructions for the cell on how to make a piece of the "spike protein" that is unique to the virus that causes COVID-19. Since only part of the protein is made, it does not do any harm to the person vaccinated. This piece of "spike protein" prompts the immune system to produce antibodies and activate the T cells, a part of the immune system that focuses on recognizing, attacking, and remembering foreign particles, to destroy infected cells. If the patient later then encounters coronavirus, the antibodies and T cells are awakened to fight the virus.



### Can I get COVID-19 disease from the vaccine?

No. You cannot develop COVID-19 disease from the vaccine. Nor can you have a false-positive PCR test.

### Do you think it is safe to take the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine?

Yes, both COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) have been thoroughly tested and side effects monitored as part of the clinical trials. Both vaccines have been authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in persons aged 18 years and older. The Pfizer vaccine can be used in adolescents aged 16-18 years.



**But this vaccine was developed so quickly, are we sure?**

This vaccine underwent a review by the FDA which was thorough and rigorous, and not much different than the usual FDA approval process. During a public health crisis, the FDA can grant an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for a treatment such as a vaccine. This means that the vaccine met safety and efficacy standards based on the currently available data from over 43,000 volunteers, and it was felt the benefits of the vaccine outweighed the risks associated with it.

**I heard there were side effects after people received the vaccine. What do we know about that?**

The most commonly reported side effects are soreness at the site of the injection as well as flu like symptoms, including fatigue, body aches, chills or fevers after the vaccine. Side effects were most common after the second dose of the vaccine, and more likely to be experienced by younger participants in the trial. These symptoms go away within the first few days after receiving the vaccine. These side effects are normal within the first few days after vaccination and tell us that the body is building protection against the virus.

**What about allergic reactions due to the vaccine?**

To date, people who have had allergic reactions to the vaccine have all recovered quickly. This risk of allergic reaction is very small and is similar to the risk of allergic reaction associated with all medications and vaccines.

**Will I be required to get the COVID-19 vaccine if I don't want to?**

No, the vaccine will not be required for anyone for some time. But we do highly recommend you get the vaccine!

**When I get the vaccine, do I need to continue wearing masks, social distancing, etc?**

Yes. While we know the vaccine prevents you from getting COVID-19 disease, we are not sure yet to what extent it prevents transmission of the virus that causes the disease, SARS-Co-V-2. So for this reason, even after you receive the vaccine you should continue social distancing, wearing masks in public and following other CDC guidelines to reduce risk of transmission.

**If I still have to do all those things after I receive the vaccine, why should I get it then?**

Ending a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available. The vaccine works with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if exposed. Other steps, like wearing a mask or distancing from others, reduces your risk of being exposed or spreading the virus if you have it. Together, the vaccine and these recommendations give us the best chance of protecting ourselves and others from COVID-19 and helping to slow its spread in our communities.



**Is the vaccine really helpful? I heard that you can develop immunity by getting COVID-19, so why do I need to get my immunity through a vaccine?**

While some patients with COVID-19 have mild disease, others can become seriously ill. Those who develop mild disease may unknowingly pass it to someone who will develop severe disease. To date, COVID-19 has been responsible for more than 300,000 deaths in the United States. There is also much that we do not know about immunity developed after an infection, including how long it lasts, which means you could potentially be infected again. Given this, a vaccine is the safer choice for developing immunity.

**I saw information on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram that made me nervous about the vaccine. Where can I find the most accurate information?**

Social media can easily and quickly spread information. Some of it is accurate and helpful, and some of it can be misleading or false, so it is always important to check the source of information. The CDC has provided excellent and trusted resources for questions about the current COVID-19 vaccines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>. Your doctor can also talk to you more about the vaccine.