

COVID-19 Vaccination Factsheet

COVID-19 is killing millions of people, especially people of color. The good news is that we now have safe vaccines that work. These vaccines teach your body to develop natural defenses to fight the virus. Getting more than 75% of our community vaccinated as soon as possible is our best chance of ending public health rules like physical distancing and wearing masks. This will help stop the spread of the virus. Get the vaccine to protect yourself, your family, and our community. Here are 11 facts about the vaccines:

1. The COVID-19 vaccine research studies by scientists to learn whether the vaccine worked and was safe were very thorough.



You may hear that the research studies, called “trials,” were rushed. You may also hear that the technology used, called “mRNA,” is new or untested.

Vaccine experts around the world worked together to develop these vaccines. mRNA vaccines and other coronavirus vaccines have been studied for over 10 years. So, scientists had a head start. All studies with volunteers followed safety rules and were reviewed by the federal Food & Drug Administration (FDA.) **Therefore, you can be sure no shortcuts were taken.**

2. The COVID-19 vaccines are very useful in preventing severe sickness.



You might hear that only one dose of an mRNA vaccine is needed for protection.

All of the approved COVID-19 vaccines work well to keep you from dying from COVID-19 or having to stay in the hospital.

If your vaccine is two doses, you do need both doses to be completely protected from the virus.

3. The COVID-19 vaccines were found to be very safe.



You might hear false concerns about the vaccine making it impossible to have children or causing serious diseases, sudden weakness in one side of your face, or other serious illnesses.

More than 250 million people have been vaccinated around the world. More than 50 million people have been vaccinated in the U.S. And over 1 million people in CT have been vaccinated.

The vaccines are very safe. There is no impact on your ability to have children and there are no other negative effects from the vaccine. But when people do get sick with COVID-19, many suffer long-term effects including lung, brain, and heart damage. This makes it more important to get vaccinated.

4. The vaccines were tested among diverse populations.



You may hear that the vaccines were not tested among racial and ethnic minorities.

The vaccine trials (research studies) made sure that the percentage of Black and Hispanic/Latinx participants matched the percentage of Black and Hispanic/Latinx

people who are in the U.S. In fact, in New Haven, recruitment stopped until the scientists at Yale had enough people of color in the study! There were about 23,000 Black and Hispanic/Latinx volunteers who took part in the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine trials.

The vaccines work just as well and are just as safe in all racial and ethnic groups.

5. Vaccines tell your immune system how to spot a signal on the virus that causes COVID-19 and create an “army” to attack it.




You might hear false concerns that the vaccine causes COVID-19.

When your body sees the signal, called a protein, from the vaccine again, either with a second vaccine dose or from infection, your “army” attacks it. If you get fevers, chills, and muscle aches a couple of days after a second vaccine dose or after the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, it is a sign that the vaccine is working but you are NOT actually sick.


You can take Tylenol or Motrin for these symptoms.

6. If you have allergies to foods, medications, or other vaccines, you can be vaccinated.

 You may hear that you should not get vaccinated if you have allergies to food, medicines, or other vaccines.


Of the first 20 million people vaccinated in the U.S., only 21 people have had severe allergic reactions. This is very rare. **We recommend that most people with allergies get vaccinated.**

7. If you had a COVID-19 infection you should still be vaccinated.

 You might hear that you do not need to be vaccinated if you had COVID-19.

You should get vaccinated because antibody protection after getting COVID-19 only lasts a few months. It is not long lasting. (Antibodies are proteins made by the immune system to spot and get rid of germs.) **Studies showed the vaccine still helps those who had COVID-19.**


8. Women who are pregnant or nursing can get the vaccine.

 You may hear that pregnant and nursing mothers are not eligible for the vaccine.

Pregnant women are at very high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19. They are also at high risk for giving birth


early, before the baby is ready to be born, or for having their baby die in the womb if they get COVID-19. Women should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with their doctor. **If you are pregnant and/or nursing and you want the vaccine, you can get it.**

9. The vaccine is safe for people with weakened immune systems.

 You might hear that those who have weakened immune systems (because they have cancer or another disease that makes it hard for their body to fight infection) are at risk for getting COVID-19 from the vaccine.


The COVID-19 vaccines do NOT contain live virus and cannot cause COVID-19. So, there are no safety concerns in people with weakened immune systems whose bodies have a hard time fighting infections. This is important because those with a weakened immune system are at high risk for severe COVID-19 disease. So, it is even more important for them to be vaccinated.

10. The vaccine is safe for people with ongoing health conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

 You may hear that it is not safe for people with medical conditions to get vaccinated.

The scientists' tests of the vaccine included people with ongoing medical conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. The vaccines were safe and effective in these people. People with medical conditions like diabetes, obesity, and heart disease are at very high risk for getting very sick and needing to be hospitalized because of a COVID-19 infection. **So, it is very important for people with medical conditions to be vaccinated.**

11. Get your vaccine as soon as you can.

 You may hear that people are waiting to see how others do before getting vaccinated.

The longer people wait to get vaccinated, the longer the virus spreads in the community. As it spreads, the virus can change and make vaccines and treatments less powerful. Severe COVID-19 can be very dangerous. **The sooner you get vaccinated, the sooner you, your family, and our community are protected.**