



# MYTHS VS FACTS

## COVID-19: Get the Facts Straight and Vaccinate

As COVID-19 continues to surge across the U.S., everyone who is eligible needs to step up and get vaccinated when it is their turn. It is natural to have questions and concerns, and APIC is here to help. **Let's get the facts straight and vaccinate!**

**MYTH** *The COVID-19 vaccine is not safe.*

**FACT**

The FDA has determined that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective to use. The vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, and vaccine developers followed all the necessary steps during clinical trials. The messenger RNA (mRNA) technology used to develop the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines allows for faster vaccine development and has been in use for years.

**MYTH** *The vaccine will give me COVID-19.*

**FACT**

mRNA vaccines do not contain a live strain of the virus that causes COVID-19 and, therefore, cannot give you COVID-19.

**MYTH** *The vaccine will alter my DNA.*

**FACT**

The mRNA in the vaccine does not enter the cell's nucleus, where your DNA is kept. The mRNA will not change your DNA, since the two do not interact.

**MYTH** *The side effects from the vaccine are worse than getting COVID-19.*

**FACT**

The vaccines prevent you from getting sick from COVID-19, a disease that has killed many people in the U.S. You may feel achy and uncomfortable after your shot, but these symptoms are temporary and signal that your body is mounting an immune response to the virus.

**MYTH** *The vaccine will make me sterile/infertile.*

**FACT**

There is no evidence to suggest that a COVID-19 infection or vaccine could result in sterility or infertility.

**MYTH** *I have already had COVID-19, so I do not need to get vaccinated.*

**FACT**

It is possible to become re-infected, which is why everyone should be vaccinated against COVID-19 regardless of whether you have previously had it.

**MYTH** *The vaccine will not be effective against the new strains, so I should just wait.*

**FACT**

The presence of new strains makes vaccination even more important. When more people are vaccinated, there are fewer chances for deadlier virus mutations to occur.

# COVID-19 Vaccination: What to Keep in Mind

## Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?



Millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccines, and these vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ensures safety before vaccines are made available. Data from large trials in patients are reviewed by experts who are completely independent from both the government and the manufacturers responsible for creating the vaccines. Additionally, the vaccines were tested in diverse patient groups (age, race, ethnicity, etc.) to ensure safety and effectiveness.

## How do the COVID-19 vaccines work?



When you receive a COVID-19 vaccine, your body builds up the immunity it needs to fight the COVID-19 illness and lessen the mild-to-severe symptoms. It is important to remember that it takes the body a few weeks after vaccination to produce the necessary antibodies to protect you from COVID-19. It is possible to become infected with SARS-CoV-2 just before or just after vaccination and get sick with COVID-19.

## Will the vaccines be effective against new variants of the coronavirus?



When more people are vaccinated, there are fewer chances for COVID-19 to spread, regardless of the mutation. Scientists expected that the virus would mutate because viruses change all the time. From the data that are currently available, the vaccines appear to be effective against the new strains of SARS-CoV-2.

## Can I test positive for COVID-19 because of the vaccine?



No, it is impossible for any of the vaccines currently authorized by the FDA to cause a positive result from a viral test (a test taken to see if you have a current infection). Additionally, none of the existing vaccines can give you COVID-19 because they do not use a live virus strain.

## What side effects can I expect from the COVID-19 vaccine?



You may experience side effects such as the ones listed below for up to a week after your vaccine; they are more likely to occur after your second dose if you are receiving a multi-dose vaccine. If they persist or worsen after a week, contact your healthcare provider immediately. Taking pain relievers like acetaminophen or ibuprofen can help prevent or lessen these symptoms.

- Localized swelling, tenderness, redness, or warm to the touch
- Fever
- Chills
- Body aches/headaches
- Joint pain
- Fatigue

## Are there any single dose vaccines? How important is the second dose?



There are single dose COVID-19 vaccines that are being given in the U.S. But if you are receiving a multi-dose vaccine, it's essential that you get that second dose because you are still at risk for getting COVID-19 until you are fully vaccinated.

## Can I stop wearing my mask after I've been vaccinated?



No, you need to continue masking when you go out in public until enough people have been vaccinated and “herd immunity” is reached. Herd immunity occurs when a high percentage of the population is immune to a disease through vaccination or prior illness. The vaccine is effective at preventing you from getting sick with COVID-19, but we do not know if it prevents you from being able to spread COVID-19 without symptoms. In order to prevent this “asymptomatic spread” to the vulnerable people in your community, continue to wear a mask, practice hand hygiene, and keep a distance of at least 6 feet between yourself and others.