



# The COVID-19 Vaccine...

# MYTHS *and* FACTS

The COVID-19 vaccines are a major development in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. But some are questioning the safety of these vaccines. The below facts may help ease any concerns you might have about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

**MYTH:** I can get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

**FACT:** You have to be exposed to the novel coronavirus to get COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccines being developed and distributed in the United States do not contain live virus particles, so you cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

**MYTH:** I will test positive for COVID-19 after I get the vaccine.

**FACT:** COVID-19 vaccines currently in use will not cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current COVID-19 infection.

**MYTH:** The speed of COVID-19 vaccine development compromised its safety.

**FACT:** The unprecedented speed of the COVID-19 vaccines was due to multiple factors, including past research into these types of vaccines, and did not require skimping on safety. Prior to the current COVID-19 outbreak, scientists had been researching other coronavirus vaccines, for diseases such as SARS and MERS. When the current pandemic hit, scientists were able to build on their past research to develop the COVID-19 vaccines in use today.

**MYTH:** The COVID-19 vaccine will alter my DNA.

**FACT:** The COVID-19 vaccine cannot alter your DNA. Both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines; they contain a small amount of RNA (ribonucleic acid) that teaches the cells of the body how to make a protein that causes the immune system to make COVID-19 antibodies. The Johnson & Johnson/Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies COVID-19 vaccine is a viral vector that cannot replicate and elicits an immune response to a protein on its surface. None of these COVID-19 vaccines interact with your DNA.

**MYTH:** I don't need to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I've already had a COVID-19 infection.

**FACT:** Health experts recommend the COVID-19 vaccine even for people who have had a COVID-19 infection. Although infection likely provides some immunity to reinfection, no one knows how long that immunity lasts. Getting vaccinated may provide additional protection and help reduce the spread of the virus.

**MYTH:** Once you receive the COVID-19 vaccine, you're immune for life.

**FACT:** At this time, it's still unknown how long immunity from the COVID-19 vaccine will last and whether it will need to be administered more than once, or even on a regular basis, like the flu shot.

**MYTH: I will get sick because of COVID-19 vaccine side effects.**

**FACT:** After vaccination, some people may develop a fever, muscle aches, headache, and/or fatigue—symptoms that go away in a few days at most. These side effects are a good sign the vaccine is working, as the symptoms are evidence that your body is developing an immune response.

**MYTH: Older adults will have more COVID-19 vaccine side effects.**

**FACT:** COVID-19 vaccine side effects are not dramatically different in people of different ages.

**MYTH: I'm allergic to eggs so I shouldn't get the COVID-19 vaccine.**

**FACT:** The current COVID-19 vaccines do not contain eggs, nor were eggs used in the development or production of the vaccines. However, those with severe allergic reactions to eggs or any other substance (i.e., anaphylaxis) are encouraged to remain after vaccination for 30 minutes for observation.

**MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccine will cause infertility.**

**FACT:** The COVID-19 vaccine, like other vaccines, works by training our bodies to develop antibodies to fight against the virus that causes COVID-19, to prevent future illness. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccines cause any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. In addition, there is no evidence suggesting that fertility problems are a side effect of ANY vaccine. People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them.

**MYTH: I don't have to wear a mask or social distance after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.**

**FACT:** It is important to keep wearing masks, continue washing your hands and continue to practice social distancing even after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

For more information about COVID-19 topics and how the pandemic can affect you and your family, visit [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19). You can also contact your local health department or physician's office for additional COVID-19 vaccine information. If you are a resident of Alabama, you can refer to the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) website at [www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19](http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19).

