

Congratulations on getting vaccinated

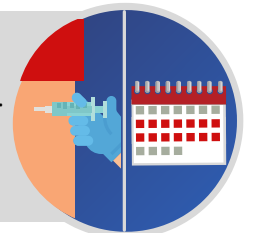
and moving our community one step closer to healthy, but we aren't quite there yet. Vaccines take time to provide their maximum protection. Here is what you can do now to continue to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

Even after getting vaccinated, it is essential that you:

- Keep wearing a good fitting mask
- Keep physical distancing
- Keep washing your hands frequently
- Get tested! If you feel sick with COVID-like symptoms including cough, shortness-of-breath, runny nose, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell, get tested! Yes, even if you had the vaccine. These are not likely to be vaccine side effects.
- Quarantine If you have had a significant COVID-19 exposure
- Report any side effects through the CDC V-safe project - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

About the vaccines

1. Vaccines take time to provide protection. A few weeks after the first shot the current vaccines are about 50% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 disease. Two weeks after the second dose of the vaccine, the effectiveness rate can be as high as 95%. Being vaccinated greatly reduces the chance of serious COVID-19 disease.



2. Vaccines are good, but not perfect. Even after the second dose, individuals are not 100% protected. That is why it is critical to continue to protect yourself and others using the strategies you already know – wear a mask, stay distanced, and wash your hands.



3. We know the COVID-19 vaccines reduce symptomatic cases and save lives. What we do not know yet is how well the vaccines reduce disease transmission. Even after being vaccinated, you may still infect others. Continue to practice physical distancing and masking up.



About Side Effects



You are likely to experience some side effects. This is normal. It is your body's immune system reacting to the vaccine and is an indication that the vaccine is working. Approximately 55-83% of individuals develop mild to moderate side effects within the first 3 days post-vaccination. They typically last 1 to 3 days. This is much shorter than the average 2 weeks recovery for mild COVID-19 disease and 6 weeks or more for severe and critical cases.



Rest, hydrate, and move that arm. Plan some downtime after your vaccine. Drink plenty of water, but avoid drinking alcohol before and after doses for a day or two. Alcohol is an immunosuppressant. And move that arm to help spread out the vaccine and reduce arm pain.



The most common side effects are pain in your arm and fatigue, but some people also experience fever, chills, nausea, diarrhea, skin rash, joint, and muscle pain. Side effects are usually stronger and more common after the second dose and in younger people. Plan for a light day if possible, especially after your second dose. They typically last only one or three days; much shorter than COVID-19 recovery.



Do not delay getting the second dose as recommended (best 21 days for Pfizer , 28 days for Moderna but up to 42 days is ok). Delaying the second dose will not reduce side effects and may decrease effectiveness.



Cough, shortness-of-breath, runny nose, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell are **not likely to be side effects of the vaccine.** If you experience these, get tested for COVID-19.



While most people who would have an anaphylactic reaction would experience it within your 15-minute post-vaccination wait, there are extremely rare instances of the reaction occurring up to two hours later. Be sure to continue monitoring for signs such as rapid heartbeat, throat swelling and seek medical attention or call 911 immediately.

About Ongoing Protection

1. While new variants may lead to some reduction in vaccine effectiveness, **current evidence suggests that the vaccines still provide significant protection against new variants** and everyone who is eligible should get vaccinated as soon as the vaccines are available to them.
2. We do not yet know how long the protection from the vaccine lasts. Researchers are currently studying this issue.



Bottom line- Stay vigilant, keep going with the recommended prevention measures until public health authorities change guidance, but have peace of mind that by getting your vaccine, you have substantially reduced your risk of disease!

