

# Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine: What to Expect Before and After



## 1 Getting Vaccinated

### Things to Know When Going to Your Appointment

- Wear a mask inside the vaccination location. The health care worker giving you the vaccine will also be wearing a mask.
- Provide an ID when you check in.
- Fill out a consent form and some paperwork.

It is important to know that the COVID vaccine is free. You do not need to have health insurance to get the vaccine, but vaccinators may ask you for your insurance information for their reimbursement purposes. You will not receive a bill for the vaccine.

You will receive the vaccination shot in your upper arm and be monitored for about 15 to 30 minutes before you leave to make sure you do not have a reaction to the vaccine.

### Things You'll Take With You When Leaving Your Appointment

- Your vaccination card or printout that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it. If your vaccine requires two doses, your vaccination card will also list the date of your second appointment.
- A fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you have received.
- Information on how to report any side effects to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). This system helps researchers track how people in the community are responding to the vaccine.
- An appointment for your second shot if your vaccine requires a second shot.

## 2 Immediately After Vaccination

### Side Effects

Side effects are a normal part of vaccination. After getting a vaccine, your body launches an immune response that can produce short-term symptoms. These symptoms are a positive sign that the body is building immunity.

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE					
ON THE ARM WHERE YOU GOT THE SHOT			THROUGHOUT THE REST OF YOUR BODY		
Pain	Swelling	Redness	Fever	Chills	Tiredness
			Headache		Muscle Pain

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Side effects are more common after the second dose of the COVID vaccine and usually last for one or two days. In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor if the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours or if your side effects do not seem to be going away after a few days.

While some of these side effects are similar to the immune system's response to a COVID-19 infection, that does not mean that you are sick with COVID-19. The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19.

MANAGING SIDE EFFECTS			
If you have pain or discomfort after the vaccine, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen. It is not advised to take this in advance of the shot.			
ON THE ARM WHERE YOU GOT THE SHOT		TO REDUCE DISCOMFORT FROM FEVER	
Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area	Use or exercise your arm	Drink plenty of fluids	Dress lightly

## 3 In the Weeks and Months After Vaccination

### If your vaccine requires two doses

A few weeks after your first COVID-19 vaccine, you will need to return to receive the second dose of the vaccination. The first shot gives you some protection against COVID-19. The second shot is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer. It will still take a few weeks after you receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for your body to build immunity against the virus that causes COVID-19.

### What you can do to help others

Once you are vaccinated, you can help friends and family register and get vaccinated too. Encourage the people around you to continue taking steps to stop the spread while they wait for a vaccine appointment and even help them make a vaccination plan if they don't have one.

While vaccination significantly decreases your chances of getting sick from COVID-19, you may still be able to spread the virus. Even after you get your vaccine, you will need to keep wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth, washing your hands often and physical distancing to protect the people who have not yet received a vaccine.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, visit [oneforallmo.com](https://oneforallmo.com).