

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Vaccine - What is it?

The first 2 vaccines expected to receive FDA emergency-use approval before the end of 2020 use a new technology – called mRNA nanoparticles - to immunize humans against COVID-19.

The vaccine is composed of small chains of proteins, called mRNA or messenger Ribonucleic Acid. The mRNA technology signals your body to produce antibodies to defend against COVID-19.

Using mRNA technology has a couple of advantages over traditional vaccines: the vaccine can be produced in mass quantities very quickly, and it teaches the body how to produce very specific and effective antibodies that inactivate COVID-19.

COVID-19 Vaccine - What is it NOT?

COVID-19 vaccines do NOT contain any live or weakened virus.

The vaccine does NOT cause any infection.

The vaccine does NOT disrupt human DNA and does NOT contain any human DNA.

It is NOT made up of fetal cells or grown in an embryo.

How is the vaccine administered?

- 1.** The Pfizer mRNA vaccine is administered as 2 intramuscular injections 21 days apart.
- 2.** The full dose is split into 2 injections to allow the body time to produce a sufficient level of antibodies and to reduce the impact of the natural immune response for fatigue.
- 3.** Side effects of fatigue and headache are usually more pronounced after the second dose.
- 4.** Both doses are necessary to achieve full immunity.

Who should get vaccinated?

Initially, the target populations will be healthcare workers, first-responders, and elderly patients in nursing homes. Eventually, the vaccine will be available community-wide in order to stop the pandemic.

Should I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

Pregnant or breastfeeding patients were excluded from the initial clinical trial. Healthcare personnel who are pregnant may choose to be vaccinated. If they have questions around getting vaccinated, a discussion with a healthcare provider might help them make an informed decision. Women who are pregnant should weigh the risk of receiving the vaccine against the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Should I get vaccinated if I am recovered from COVID-19?

Yes, however those that have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days should be out of isolation and recovered prior to receiving the vaccine.

What major side effects does the vaccine cause?

No serious safety concerns have been observed in the 43,000 participants enrolled. The most common side effects were fatigue at 3.8% and headache at 2%.

Is the vaccine made from a human source?

No. The mRNA vaccine is mass produced in a laboratory. It is a chain of proteins that contain the code that results in the patient being able to produce antibodies to defend against COVID-19.

References:

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/pfizer/clinical-considerations.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fvaccines%2Fcovid-19%2Finfo-by-manufacturer%2Fpfizer%2Fclinical-considerations.html#vaccination-special-populations

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