COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to be a resident of Florida to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

State Surgeon General Scott Rivkees issued a Public Health Advisory on April 29, 2021, authorizing the administration of COVID-19 vaccines to any eligible person (as authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration) who is a Florida resident or people who are in Florida for the purpose of providing goods or services for the benefit of residents and visitors of the state, including farmworkers, construction workers, and those working in Florida's tourism industry.

Where can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

There are over 1,000 vaccination sites available across Florida, including county health departments, retail pharmacy partners Publix, Walmart/Sam's Club, and Southeastern Grocers (Winn-Dixie, Harveys, and Fresco y Más), and community and faith-based vaccination sites.

You can find vaccination sites by county or city and contact information for each location on the Florida Department of Health's [Vaccine Locator Webpage](#).

You can preregister with the statewide preregistration system by either calling each county's designated phone number (a complete list of phone numbers is available on the Florida Department of Health's [COVID-19 Vaccines in Florida Webpage](#)) or visiting [MyVaccine.FL.gov](#).

When will I be able to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

All Floridians are eligible to receive any COVID-19 vaccine as authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in Florida.

What COVID-19 vaccines are available and for what ages?

There are currently three vaccines authorized and recommended to prevent COVID-19 in the U.S.:
- The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for persons 12 years of age and older.
- The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for persons 18 years of age and older.
- Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for persons 18 years of age and older.

The Florida Department of Health will continue to provide information to the public as other COVID-19 vaccines become available.

Are COVID-19 vaccines safe and effective?

Yes, the U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure that all vaccines are as safe as possible.

All COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention monitor vaccine safety and side effects once vaccines are in use.

How did COVID-19 vaccines get developed so fast?

Researchers used existing clinical trial networks to begin conducting COVID-19 vaccine trials.

Manufacturing was started while the clinical trials were still underway. Normally, manufacturers conserve their resources by waiting to begin manufacturing until after completion of the trials.

mRNA vaccines, like Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, can be manufactured in large amounts more quickly than traditional vaccines.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are prioritizing review, authorization, and recommendation of COVID-19 vaccines.

How much does it cost to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

The federal government is providing COVID-19 vaccines free of charge to people living in the U.S.

If you are denied a vaccine or asked to pay any fee, please contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General hotline at 1-800-447-8477 or TIPS.HHS.GOV.

For more information visit: www.CDC.gov/Coronavirus/2019-nCoV/Vaccines/KeyThingsToKnow.html.

What are common side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

After vaccination, you might have some side effects. These will likely go away in a few days. Side effects are normal signs your body is building protection. Common side effects may include: pain and swelling on the arm where you received the shot, fever, chills, tiredness, and headache.

What do I need to know about Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine?

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, while rare, some people (mostly females 18-49 years of age) have developed blood clots with low levels of platelets (blood cells that help your body stop bleeding) after getting Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. Symptoms often began about one to two weeks following vaccination.

You should seek medical attention right away if you have any of the following symptoms: shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling, persistent abdominal pain, severe or persistent headaches or blurred vision, or easy bruising or tiny blood spots under the skin beyond the site where you received the shot.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, although the overall risk is low, pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared to non-pregnant people. Pregnant people with COVID-19 might also be at increased risk for other poor outcomes related to pregnancy, such as preterm birth.

Experts think COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a specific risk for pregnant people. However, there are currently limited data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant people.

So far, systems in place to monitor vaccine safety have not identified any specific safety concerns for pregnant people. If you are unsure, you should speak with your health care provider.

Can COVID-19 vaccines cause infertility?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems. If you are trying to become pregnant, you do not need to avoid pregnancy after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

Can COVID-19 vaccines give me COVID-19 or affect my DNA?

No, COVID-19 vaccines cannot give you COVID-19 and do not affect your DNA.

There are currently two types of COVID-19 vaccines authorized and recommended to prevent COVID-19 in the U.S.:
- mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.
- Viral vector COVID-19 vaccines.

Essentially, both vaccine types are instructions for your body's immune system on how to make examples of the spike proteins found on the surface of the COVID-19 virus. The main difference between these two types of vaccines is how these instructions get delivered to your body's immune system.

mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (like Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna):
- Do not contain any virus, so they cannot give you COVID-19.
- Use mRNA to deliver instructions to your body on how to make the spike proteins.
  - mRNA never enters the nucleus of your cells, which is where your DNA is kept.
  - After the mRNA delivers the instructions, your cells break it down and get rid of it.
- Cannot change your DNA in any way.

Viral vector COVID-19 vaccines (like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen):
- Use a harmless version of a different virus (called a "vector") to deliver instructions to your body on how to make the spike proteins.
- Do not contain the COVID-19 virus and cannot give you COVID-19.
- Cannot change your DNA in any way.

If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

You should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That is because we are still learning how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected again.

If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your health care provider if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

When am I considered fully vaccinated?

You are fully vaccinated when your body has built up protection against the virus. That is two weeks after:
- The second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines.
- The single-dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

What if I am not fully vaccinated?

Until you are fully vaccinated, keep using COVID-19 mitigation strategies: wear a mask, stay six feet apart from others, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, and wash your hands often.

Do I still need to watch for COVID-19 symptoms?

Yes, regardless of vaccination status, you should continue to watch for symptoms of COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, you should stay away from others and be evaluated. This may include getting tested for COVID-19.

Do COVID-19 vaccines work against new variants of the COVID-19 virus?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines used in the U.S. are effective against known variants of the COVID-19 virus.