Phone: 215-276-3646
Email: OTI@salus.edu
Website: www.SalusUhealth.com/OTI

Common Questions Related to the COVID-19 Vaccine

Questions Categories:

- How do vaccines work?
- What are the types of vaccines available?
- How do I know when I qualify to receive the vaccine?
- Specific concerns about receiving the Covid-19 vaccine

How do vaccines work?

- **Specifically the Covid-19 vaccine?**
  - *mRNA vaccines contain material from the virus that causes Covid-19 that gives our cells instructions for how to make a harmless protein that is unique to the virus.*
  - *After our cells make copies of the protein, they destroy the genetic material from the vaccine.*
  - *Our bodies recognize that the protein should not be there and build T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes that will remember how to fight the virus that causes Covid-19 if we are infected in the future*
- **Can the vaccine give me Covid-19?**
  - *No, none of the authorized and recommended Covid-19 vaccines or Covid-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes Covid-19*
  - *A Covid-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with Covid-19.*
- **How long will my immunity to Covid-19 last after getting vaccinated? Will this be a yearly vaccination process?**
  - *We don't know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that Covid-19 has caused very serious illness and death for a lot of people*
- **Will the vaccine hurt or make me sick? What side effects should I anticipate with the vaccine?**
  - *After Covid-19 vaccination, you may have some side effects. These are normal signs that your body is building protection. The side effects from* Covid-19 *vaccination, such as chills or tiredness, may affect your ability to do daily activities, and they should go away in a few days*
- **Where can I find more reliable information on Covid-19 and vaccines?**
  - *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/*
- **What are the benefits of getting the Covid-19 vaccine?**
  - *All Covid-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing Covid-19.*
  - *Experts believe that getting a Covid-19 vaccine may also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get Covid-19*

What are the types of vaccines available?

- **What COVID-19 vaccines have been approved and how do they work?**
  - *Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is 95% effective in preventing the COVID-19 virus with symptoms. This vaccine is for people age 16 and older. It requires two injections given 21 days apart. The second dose can be given up to six weeks after the first dose, if needed.*
  - *Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is 94% effective in preventing the COVID-19 virus with symptoms. This vaccine is for people age 18 and older. It requires two injections given 28 days apart. The second dose can be given up to six weeks after the first dose, if needed.*
  - *Janssen/Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. In clinical trials, this vaccine was 66% effective in preventing the COVID-19 virus with symptoms — as of 14 days after vaccination. The vaccine also was 85% effective at preventing severe disease with the COVID-19 virus — at least 28 days after vaccination. This vaccine is for people age 18 and older. It requires one injection.*
- **Does it make a difference which vaccine I receive? Where can I find more information?**
  - *In general, no, unless you have had a prior allergic or other reaction to a vaccine in the past. In this instance it is best to talk to your doctor or pharmacist to determine if one vaccine is more beneficial for your specific situation.*
  - *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/*
- **How many doses will I have to receive? Does the dosing affect the quality of the vaccine? What happens if the second vaccine in the series is delayed?**
  - *With both Covid-19 mRNA vaccines, you will need 2 shots to get the most protection. The timing between your first and second shot depends on which vaccine you received.*
  - *Pfizer-BioNTech doses should be given 3 weeks (21 days) apart*
  - *Moderna doses should be given 1 month (28 days) apart*
  - *Your second dose may be given up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose, if necessary*
- **How does the Johnson & Johnson vaccine work?**
  - *Many vaccines use a weakened or inactivated form of the target pathogen to trigger an immune response. Viral vector vaccines use a different virus as a vector instead, which delivers important instructions (in the form of a gene) to our cells.*
  - *For Covid-19 vaccines, a modified virus delivers a gene that instructs our cells to make a SARS-CoV-2 antigen called the spike protein. This antigen triggers production of antibodies and a resulting immune response.*
  - *The virus used in a viral vector vaccine poses no threat of causing illness in humans because it has been modified or, in some cases, because the type of virus used as the vector cannot cause disease in humans*
    - **How is it different from the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines?**

- *The J&J vaccine uses a different approach to instruct human cells to make the SARS-2 spike protein, which then triggers an immune response. It is what's known as a viral vectored vaccine*
- *This is the same approach to make an Ebola vaccine that has been authorized for use by the European Medicines Agency*

➢ **How effective is the vaccine?**

- *It is 66.3% effective in clinical trials (efficacy) at preventing laboratory-confirmed Covid-19 illness in people who had no evidence of prior infection 2 weeks after receiving the vaccine.*
- *People had the most protection 2 weeks after getting vaccinated*

How do I know when I qualify to receive the vaccine?

❖ **When, where, and how can I get the Covid-19 vaccine?**

➢ *When: Currently, we are in Phase 1A of Pennsylvania's vaccine rollout. Your eligibility will determine what phase you are in and when you can register for the Covid-19 vaccine*

➢ *Where: There is a running list of places that are currently or will be offering the Covid-19 vaccine Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid, and other select pharmacies; Hospitals; Clinics; Doctors' offices; Health departments; and Assisted living facilities*

➢ *How: If you are eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine, you can register for the vaccine online through websites and patient portals through specific health networks*

➢ **Who will be administering the vaccine to me?**

- *It depends on the vaccination site*

❖ **Do I have to pay for the vaccine? Do I need health insurance?**

➢ *The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States*

Specific concerns about receiving the Covid-19 vaccine

❖ **What are the long-term side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?**

➢ *The FDA and CDC are continuing to monitor safety to make sure long-term side effects are identified.*

➢ *Because COVID-19 vaccines clinical trials only started in the summer of 2020, it's not yet clear if these vaccines will have long-term side effects. However, vaccines rarely cause long-term side effects.*

❖ **Is it safe to get a Covid-19 vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?**

➢ *It is important that you ask specific questions related to your medical history to your doctor. However, in most instances, people with underlying medical conditions can receive the FDA-authorized Covid-19 vaccines as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to a Covid-19 vaccine or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine.*

➢ *Vaccination is an important consideration for adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions because they are at increased risk for severe illness from Covid-19.*

- **I already had Covid-19. Should I get the vaccine? Should I wait to get it?**
  - *Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had Covid-19*
  - *Experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from Covid-19*
  - *If you were treated for Covid-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a Covid-19 vaccine.*
- **Can my children be vaccinated?**
  - *The Pfizer mRNA vaccine is authorized for people 16 and older*
  - *Moderna mRNA vaccine is authorized for people 18 and older*
  - *Johnson & Johnson vaccine is authorized for people 18 and older*
- **Is it safe to get the vaccine while pregnant or breastfeeding/nursing?**
  - *Your pregnancy and or medical history will determine the overall safety, however, there is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from Covid-19 vaccination 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. If you have any concerns, consult with your OBGYN.*
- **What are my chances of having a severe allergic reaction?**
  - *Monitoring by the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System detected 21 cases of anaphylaxis after administration of a reported 1,893,360 first doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine*
  - *11.1 cases per million doses and 71% of these occurred within 15 minutes of vaccination*
- **Is double masking more effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19?**
  - *Wearing a cloth mask over a surgical mask offers more protection against the coronavirus, as does tying knots on the ear loops of surgical masks*

For more information on COVID-19 visit:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/
Mayo Clinic: https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/
PA Department of Health: https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/