



COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet

The Coalition to Stop the Spread
January 2021

The Coalition to Stop the Spread is a group of businesses, nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher learning and other private-sector organizations in Ohio that recognize the threat COVID-19 presents to our health and our economy. Members of the Coalition understand that employees are on the frontlines of the fight and are committed to amplifying safety messages and encouraging our workforce to lead by personal example.

With the approval of COVID-19 vaccines, there are three very important ways members of the Coalition can support the vaccine effort in their communications to employees.

1. Help to share fact-based information about the vaccines, their safety and effectiveness.
2. Encourage Ohioans to be patient as the state ramps up the vaccine roll out.
3. Remind that leading up to getting the vaccine – and very likely for at least some time after – Ohio’s workforce should stay dedicated to the best safety protocols of wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, etc.

To support member communications, following is a collection of known facts about the vaccines sourced from the FDA, CDC and Ohio Department of Health.

Key Facts

- Right now, there is a limited supply of the vaccines. As a result, Ohio, like all states, is taking a phased approach to vaccinating the population. ([source](#))
 - In the first phase, the vaccines will be made available to those most at risk, such as healthcare workers and persons caring for COVID-19 patients. ([source](#))
 - As supply increases in the coming months, Ohio will graduate to include additional sectors of the population until vaccines can be made available to all Ohioans. ([source](#))
 - The most current information about Ohio’s COVID-19 vaccination program can be found here: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program/welcome/covid-19-vaccination-program>
- In December 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued emergency use authorization for two COVID-19 vaccines, one from manufacturer [Moderna](#) and the other from [Pfizer-BioNTech](#).
 - Both the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines will help protect you from getting COVID-19. ([source](#))

- About the Moderna vaccine:
 - The Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine is administered as a two-dose series, one month apart. ([source](#))
 - The FDA has authorized the emergency use of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine in those 18 and older. ([source](#))
 - A detailed fact sheet on the Moderna vaccine can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144638/download>.
- About the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine:
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is administered as a two-dose series, three weeks apart. ([source](#))
 - The FDA has authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine in those 16 and older. ([source](#))
 - A detailed fact sheet on the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144414/download>
- Both the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines are mRNA (“Messenger RNA”) vaccines and function differently from traditional vaccines that put a weakened or inactivated virus into our bodies. ([source](#))
 - mRNA vaccines do not give the live COVID-19 virus to patients. ([source](#))
 - Instead, the mRNA teaches human cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response like the real virus would. ([source](#))
 - These vaccines do not affect or interact with our DNA (genetic material) in any way. The mRNA from the vaccines never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. The cell gets rid of the mRNA after its work is done. ([source](#))
 - Researchers have been studying and working with mRNA vaccines for decades. Interest has grown in these vaccines because they can be developed in a laboratory using readily available materials. This means the process can be standardized and scaled up, making vaccine development faster than traditional methods. ([source](#))
- After a COVID-19 vaccination, people may experience some side effects such as soreness at the spot of injection or flu-like symptoms. These are normal and signs your body is building protection against the virus. ([source](#))
- Beyond the two vaccines approved for emergency use, many other COVID-19 vaccines are still being developed and tested. ([source](#))
- All potential COVID-19 vaccines are being carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will be authorized or approved only if they make it substantially less likely you’ll get COVID-19. ([source](#))
- Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases and early data from clinical trials, experts believe that getting a vaccine may reduce the seriousness of the disease if you do get COVID-19. ([source](#))
- Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, [particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#). ([source](#))

- Current COVID-19 vaccines do not eliminate the need to practice safety practices such as wearing a mask, social distancing, avoiding crowds and washing hands frequently. ([source](#))
 - Experts don't yet know whether you can carry the virus and spread it to others after being vaccinated. The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations [to protect yourself and others](#) will offer the best protection from COVID-19. ([source](#))
 - As experts learn more about how COVID-19 vaccination may help reduce spread of the disease, the CDC will continue to update its recommendation based on the latest science. ([source](#))
- A CDC dashboard with real-time information on vaccines distributed and administered in the U.S. can be found here: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>.

Questions and Answers

1. Are the approved COVID-19 vaccines safe?

- a. Safety is a top priority of the U.S. development and approval process. Developing COVID-19 vaccines involved steps similar to those used for other vaccines such as the flu or measles vaccines, which have successfully protected millions of Ohioans for decades. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as well as independent medical experts, have ensured that every detail of COVID-19 vaccines is thoroughly and rigorously evaluated. Evidence shows that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and work to prevent COVID-19. ([source](#))

2. Were the COVID-19 vaccines developed too quickly?

- a. There have been no shortcuts in the vaccine development process. The process has been quicker as a result of strategic efforts to run concurrent trial phases, as well as a commitment to help condense timelines and reduce or eliminate months-long waiting periods during which documents would be prepared or wait for review. Messenger RNA (mRNA), used by the first two vaccines to receive FDA emergency use authorization (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna), is not unknown. Researchers have been studying mRNA for decades, and early-stage clinical trials using mRNA vaccines have been carried out for influenza, Zika, rabies, and cytomegalovirus CMV. Recent technological advancements in RNA biology and chemistry, as well as delivery systems, have allowed mRNA to be used for safe and effective vaccines. ([source](#))

3. If I have recovered from COVID-19, do I still need to get the vaccine?

- a. At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19, and because re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, people may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before. ([source](#))

4. Do the approved COVID-19 vaccines cause infertility or other harmful medical problems?

- a. In the Pfizer-BioNTech phase 3 clinical trial of more than 43,000 individuals, and the Moderna Phase 3 clinical trial with 30,000 participants, no serious safety concerns were observed. The most common side effects were fatigue, headache, soreness or redness at the injection site, and muscle or joint pain. Side effects like these, while unpleasant, are a sign that your body is creating immunity from the COVID-19 virus. ([source](#))

5. After I get the vaccine, can I stop wearing a mask or adhering to the other safety protocols?

- a. The vaccine will protect you from getting ill from COVID-19, but experts don't yet know whether or not you can still carry the virus and spread it to others. At present, those who get the vaccine should continue to wear masks and practice social distancing. ([source](#))

6. Can other vaccines help prevent me from getting COVID-19?

- a. Other vaccines, such as those for flu, measles, or other diseases, will not protect you from COVID-19. Only approved vaccines designed specifically to protect you from COVID-19 can prevent COVID-19. While a flu vaccine will not prevent you from getting COVID-19, it can prevent you from getting influenza (flu) at the same time as COVID-19. Because the flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both be spreading during this time, getting a flu vaccine will be more crucial than ever. ([source](#))

7. I've seen a lot of rumors on social media about vaccines. How can I tell what is true?

- a. The internet is rife with dangerous misinformation about COVID-19 and vaccines, and it can be difficult to know what to trust. The best thing you can do is educate yourself about the vaccines with information from trustworthy sources. Learn more about finding credible vaccine information in [this article from the CDC](#), and separate myths from facts on [this page from the Ohio Department of Health](#). ([source](#))

