

# The COVID-19 Vaccine

## FREQUENT QUESTIONS

**Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?** YES. The vaccine testing exceeded safety measures and was approved by the FDA for Emergency Use.

**Is the Johnson & Johnson vaccine as effective as the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine?** We cannot compare the efficacy of the various trials because when the Moderna and Pfizer tests were run, variants were rare. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine was tested with variants. We DO know that all three vaccines are effective at preventing people from getting very sick, going into the ICU, or dying.

**What are the ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccine?** The vaccine does not contain the COVID-19 virus and cannot give it to you. It contains ingredients common to many vaccines, contains no preservatives, no antibiotics, and no products from humans or animals. There's nothing new or scary in it. The vaccines cannot give you the COVID-19 virus or a cold.

**What is the difference between an mRNA and vector vaccine?** The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines use mRNA to teach your body to recognize the spike protein on the Covid-19 virus. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine uses a deactivated cold virus to do the same thing. They all teach your body to recognize the COVID-19 virus so that if you're ever exposed to COVID, your body knows how to fight it off.

**Will a vaccine protect me from getting COVID-19?** YES. All three available vaccines are safe. They all are 100% effective in preventing severe COVID-19 and hospitalization. The vaccination works by teaching your immune system to recognize and fight the virus, and this protects you from getting seriously sick. During the testing, NO ONE who had the vaccine became seriously ill from COVID.

**What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?** After the vaccination, you may have some side effects. These are normal signs your body is building protection. They should go away in a few days. Common side effects include tenderness, swelling of the lymph nodes in the same arm of the injection, swelling, and redness. General side effects include fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, nausea and vomiting, and fever. These go away quickly.

**I have already had COVID. Should I get vaccinated and when?** YES, if you have had COVID-19, you should get vaccinated to help reduce the chance of getting it again. You must wait 14 days from a positive COVID-19 test or the start of symptoms to get the vaccine. If you were treated with monoclonal antibodies, you should wait 90 days.

**Do I still have to wear a mask and socially distance after the first vaccine? After the second vaccine?** Everyone, including those who received one or two doses, should continue to wear masks, wash hands, and practice social distancing.

**How do I schedule an appointment for the COVID-19 vaccine?** Wheeler is contacting its patients to schedule vaccine appointments. Wheeler is also accepting non-patients when it has additional vaccine doses. Wheeler will do its best to stock both the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccine so that you can have a choice, but there may be times when we are only able to order one or the other.

For more information visit the Department of Public Health Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>