



Congratulations on receiving your first dose of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
Please read through this post-vaccination information handout completely.

Here is what to expect:

- Please remain in the observation area for at least 15 minutes. You may be asked to stay for 30 minutes if you had allergic reactions in the past or advised by an allergist. **For your safety, it is important that you stay for the full duration of the observation period.**
- While you are waiting, please consider registering with v-safe at <https://vsafe.cdc.gov/>. This is a smartphone-based tool that helps the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) track side effects from the vaccine. You may access more information about the program at <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/ppt/2020/v-safe-information-sheet-508c.pdf>.
- Additionally, now is a good time to schedule your second vaccine dose.
- You may obtain a copy of the vaccine fact sheets accessing the following links:
 - Pfizer-BioNTech: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144413/download>
 - Moderna: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144638/download>
- You are likely to experience at least one side effect from the vaccine, especially if you previously had COVID-19. Here is a list of some commonly reported side effects.
 - Pain at the injection site
 - Fatigue
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Chills
 - Joint pain
 - Enlarged lymph nodes
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Fever
- If you previously had COVID-19, you are more likely to experience some of the side effects, especially if you had them while you had COVID-19.
- You may take ibuprofen (Advil, Motril) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed for symptom relief. You should, however, avoid taking either medications prophylactically to prevent the onset of symptoms as that may affect the efficacy of the vaccine.
- The symptoms should typically last 24-48 hours, but not more than 72 hours. If you continue to have symptoms for more than 72 hours after receiving the vaccine, you should contact your primary care provider.
- If, after leaving the vaccine clinic, you develop lightheadedness, confusion, difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips, face and/or throat, generalize rash or hives, you should immediately go to the nearest emergency department for further evaluation.
- If you experience other symptoms at any time, you should contact your primary care physician for further instructions.
- If you develop cough, shortness-of-breath, or loss of smell and/or taste, you should seek medical attention immediately for further evaluation.

Helpful information while you wait for your next dose of the vaccine:

What will this vaccine do for me?

- The vaccine will help reduce your risk of getting COVID-19 with symptoms in about a week.
- If you do get COVID-19, it should reduce the risk of you getting sick enough to need to be hospitalized.

How safe is this vaccine?

- The vaccine clinical trials reported very low occurrences of severe side effects.
- The clinical trial data were closely reviewed by the FDA advisory committee for safety before the FDA allowed their use under the Emergency Use Authorization.

Are there any long-term side effects to the vaccine?

- The long-term safety profile of either vaccines is still under investigation.
- Thus far, there are no obviously long-term side effects that are being reported.

What should I do if I experience an allergic reaction to the vaccine?

- If you think you are experiencing an allergic reaction after leaving the vaccine clinic, you should seek medical attention immediately, preferably at the local emergency department.
- Once your symptoms have resolved and your medical provider feels that you experienced an allergic reaction, you should request to see an allergist to determine the cause of the reaction(s).
- You should not receive the second dose until you are approved to receive it by the allergist.
- If you are unable to be evaluated by an allergist, you should not receive the second dose.

If I am not able to keep my appointment to get my second dose of the vaccine, will I have to start over?

- No. You should reschedule your appointment to get your second dose as soon as possible.

Does it matter where I get the second dose of the vaccine?

- It is preferable that you receive both doses of the vaccine at the same location, so you get the same vaccine both times.

Can I still get COVID-19 after the first dose of the vaccine?

- Yes. It is still possible to get COVID-19 after the first dose. The vaccine is not 100% effective in protecting you from developing COVID-19 with symptoms.

Can I get the second dose of the vaccine if I develop COVID-19 after the first dose?

- Yes. You should, however, wait until you have recovered from your illness before receiving the second dose.

Can I get the second dose of the vaccine if I receive antibody therapy, i.e., bamlanivimab, REGN-COV, and convalescent plasma, for the treatment of COVID-19?

- Yes, but you will be asked to wait 90 days after receiving the treatment before getting the second dose.

Do I still need to wear a facemask in public?

- Yes. Because you can still get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, you should continue to wear facemasks in public.
- You should also continue to remain physically distanced in public (at least 6 feet apart), avoid large crowds, and maintain good hand hygiene.

Can I be around someone with COVID-19 after getting the vaccine?

- You should still avoid close contact with anyone with COVID-19.

Am I able to travel freely after getting the vaccine?

- You should still travel only when necessary while taking all the appropriate precautions.
- Currently, CDC requires proof of negative COVID-19 test results, either PCR- or antigen-based test, 1-3 days prior to departure on flights to international destinations.
- CDC has not listed proof of vaccination as an acceptable alternative to negative COVID-19 test result.
- Most travel destinations have not modified their travel restrictions to include vaccination. Please check with your travel destination(s) on their entry and departure requirements.
- If you decide to travel, it is important to return in time to receive your second vaccine dose.

What should I do if I had close contact with someone with COVID-19? Do I need to be in quarantine?

- If you have had close contact with someone with COVID-19, you should contact your primary care physician for further instructions. Your physician may request that you get tested for COVID-19.

- Close contact is defined by being in close proximity (less than 6 feet) of someone with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes of accumulated time over 24 hours.
- Until you are fully vaccinated, you are required to quarantine after exposure to someone with suspected or known COVID-19.

If I get COVID-19, do I need to be in isolation?

- Yes. It is not known if the vaccine will prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.
- You will need to be in isolation for at least 10 days, depending on the severity of the infection.

If I get the COVID-19 test, will the vaccine affect the test results?

- It depends on the test. The vaccine will not affect the results of PCR- and antigen-based tests. These tests are typically the ones that will require swabbing your nose to collect the samples.
- Vaccination may, however, affect the results of the antibody tests as the detection of antibodies represents your immune system's response to the vaccine.

Can I transmit the virus that causes COVID-19 through vaccination to those who have not had COVID-19?

- No. The vaccine does not contain any virus, so no virus can be transmitted through the vaccine.
- However, if you are already infected with virus that causes COVID-19 when you received the vaccine, but have no symptoms, you can still transmit the virus to others.

Is this vaccine effective against the variant strains that I have read about in the news?

- Although there are laboratory data to suggest that the vaccines are effective against some of the variant strains, we do not have the clinical evidence to show the vaccines' effectiveness against the variant strains yet.

Are there other things I should do or avoid, like medications or foods?

- No. You may continue to take your medications as prescribed by your providers.
- There are no dietary restrictions.

Can I receive other vaccines at the same time I am receiving this vaccine?

- Preferably, you should wait until you receive all the doses of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine before receiving other vaccines and at least 14 days after the second vaccine dose, if possible.
- It is allowable to receive another vaccine before completing the COVID-19 vaccination series if you are in a situation where there is an immediate clinical. Your medical provider will determine that and advise you if that is the case.

Will this vaccine alter my DNA?

- No. The mRNA in the vaccine does not enter the cell nucleus where your DNA resides.
- The mRNA in the vaccine degrades shortly after entering your cells.

Do the vaccines contain microchips?

- No.

I have other questions that are not covered in this handout, who should I contact to help getting the answers?

- Your primary care provider is a good resource for vaccine-related questions.
- The RiverStone Health website also contains a list of general questions and answers. You can access them at <https://covid.riverstonehealth.org/>.

