



Congratulations on receiving your second dose of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna). You have completed the vaccination series. 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.**
- If you have not done so already, 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. Even if you have already registered when you received your first vaccine dose, you still need to register with them again for the second vaccine dose. You may access more information about the program at <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/ppt/2020/v-safe-information-sheet-508c.pdf>.
- You may obtain a copy of the vaccine fact sheets by accessing the following links:
 - For the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144414/download>
 - For the Moderna vaccine: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144638/download>
- You are likely to experience at least one side effect from the vaccine, even if you have not already experienced it after the first dose. 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 experienced side effect(s) from the first dose of the vaccine, you would likely experience similar side effects again, and more intensely. This is especially true with symptoms such as headaches, muscle aches, joint pain, fatigue, and chills.
- You may take ibuprofen (Advil, Motril) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed for relief. You should, however, avoid taking them 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, generalized 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 now that you have been vaccinated against COVID-19:

What will this vaccine do for me?

- The vaccine will reduce your risk of getting COVID-19 with symptoms.
- If you develop COVID-19, the vaccine will reduce your risk of becoming sick enough to require hospitalization.

When will I be considered fully vaccinated?

- You will be considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after the second dose.

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 the safety profiles before offering recommendations to allow their use under the Emergency Use Authorization.
- The CDC is currently investigating reports of cases of inflammation of the heart in teenagers and young adults. Most reported cases occur in teenage males and after the second dose of the vaccine. These cases are rare, and many of them are mild and recover fully. CDC continues to recommend vaccination against COVID-19 for everyone 12 years of age or older given the risk of COVID-19 illness and related, possibly severe, complications.

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

- The long-term safety profile of either vaccines is still under investigation.
- Thus far, no obvious long-term side effects have been 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).

Will I need booster doses in the future?

- It is not known at this time what the duration of immunity that is provided by the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines or the need for booster doses to maintain the appropriate level of immunity.

Can I still get COVID-19 now that I am vaccinated?

- Yes. The vaccine is not 100% effective in protecting you from developing COVID-19 with symptoms.

Now that I am fully vaccinated, what can I safely do?

- You may resume activities in public without wearing masks or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.
- If you have an impaired or suppressed immune system, you should consult with your physician or specialist before deciding to continue wearing masks or physical distancing in public.
- If you are a healthcare worker, you should check with your employer's infection control policy on your facility's facemask use requirement.
- You may travel within the U.S. without the need to get tested or self-quarantine.
- You do not need to be quarantined or get tested after being around someone who has COVID-19 unless you have symptoms. The exception to this rule is if you are a resident or employee of correctional and detention facilities and homeless shelters.

What should I continue to do despite being fully vaccinated?

- You should still take steps to protect yourself and others if you travel using public transportation, including airplanes.
- You should continue to monitor for COVID-19 symptoms after being around someone who has COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, you get tested.
- If you have a condition or take medications that weaken your immune system, you should discuss with your healthcare provider about your activities as you may need to continue all recommended precautions to prevent COVID-19.

Am I still required to be tested for COVID-19 if I want to travel internationally?

- You should still travel only when necessary while taking all the appropriate precautions.
- You do not need to be tested for COVID-19 before traveling out of the U.S. You should, however, check if your destination if it requires proof of negative COVID-19 test result, or any other requirements, before arrival.
- CDC continues to require proof of negative COVID-19 test result, either PCR- or antigen-based test, 1-3 days prior to departure on flights to the U.S. regardless of the vaccination status.
- You do not need to self-quarantine, but you should still get tested 3-5 days after returning.

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

- If you are fully vaccinated, you will not need to be in quarantine.
- You should continue to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after the exposure. If you develop symptoms, you should be evaluated for COVID-19.

If I am a healthcare worker and had close contact with someone with COVID-19, am I restricted from returning to work?

- If you are fully vaccinated, you will not be required to be in quarantine.
- If you work in an acute care setting, e.g., hospital or clinic, you may continue to work without restrictions. You should, however, continue to monitor for fever and COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days after the last exposure.
- If you work in a post-acute or long-term care facility (e.g., nursing home or skilled nursing facility), congregate living setting, or correctional facility, you should check with your facility's policy for their return-to-work criteria.

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

- Yes. It is not known if vaccination 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 vaccination 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.
- Those who received the vaccine may have positive antibody test result. The detection of antibodies represents your immune system's response to the vaccine.

Should I ask my doctor to perform an antibody test to confirm that I have antibodies after I am vaccinated?

- Antibody testing to confirm immunity is not recommended at this time.

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. Therefore, 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.

If I have other vaccines I am scheduled to get, when should I get them?

- You may receive this vaccine at or around the same time as other non-COVID-19 vaccines.

If I have other questions, 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/>.

