



Congratulations on receiving your **second or third dose** of Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) or Moderna 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.**
- 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 a previous dose of the vaccine, you would likely experience similar side effects again, and possibly more intensely. This is especially true with symptoms such as headaches, muscle aches, joint pain, fatigue, and chills.
- You may take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 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?**

- Almost 200 million doses of the vaccines have been given and occurrences of severe adverse reactions have been very low.
- 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.
- On June 23, 2021, the CDC/ACIP had reviewed the reported cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart) and pericarditis (inflammation of the sac around the heart). The cases predominately occurred in young males. Many of the cases were mild and all fully recovered. Based on the benefit-risk assessment, CDC continues to recommend the vaccine to everyone aged 12 years and 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 additional doses in the future?**

- The FDA has approved, and the CDC recommended one additional mRNA vaccine dose given 28 days following the completion of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccination series in moderately to severely immunocompromised individuals. These individuals include those who have
  - Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
  - Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
  - Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
  - Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
  - Advanced or untreated HIV infection
  - Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response
- The CDC has also recommended that the following groups who are fully vaccinated with Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®) for at least 6 months prior **should** receive one additional dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®)
  - Individuals aged 65 years and older
  - Residents of long-term care settings who are aged 18 years and older
  - Individuals aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions
- The CDC has recommended that the following groups who are fully vaccinated with Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®) for at least 6 months prior **may** receive one additional dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®). The decision to receive the additional vaccine dose should be made after discussing with your healthcare provider.
  - First responders, e.g., healthcare workers, police, firefighters, congregate care staff
  - Education staff, e.g., teachers, support staff, daycare workers

- Food and agriculture workers
  - Manufacturing workers
  - Corrections workers
  - U.S. Postal Service workers
  - Public transit workers
  - Grocery store workers
- Those who are fully vaccinated with either Moderna mRNA or J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccines are not eligible for the additional vaccine dose at this time. Individuals who are fully vaccinated with Moderna mRNA COVID-19 vaccine and moderately to severely immunocompromised, however, are eligible for an additional vaccine dose. (see above)

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

- The vaccine is not 100% effective in protecting you from developing COVID-19 with symptoms. Breakthrough infections are expected but uncommon. However, you may receive extra protection if you continue to use facemasks while in public, especially in indoor public areas.

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

- You may resume activities in most outdoor settings without wearing masks or physically distancing.
- You should continue to wear masks while in indoor public spaces or anywhere involving large crowds.
- If you have an impaired or suppressed immune system, you should continue to wear masks and physical distance 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.

**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 get tested if you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time.
- 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. It is recommended that you get tested 3-5 days following the exposure.
- If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time, you should get tested immediately.
- You should wear a facemask while in public and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after the exposure.

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

- You should contact your employer or check with your facility's policy regarding COVID-19 exposure and work restrictions.

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

- Yes. 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?**

- There are laboratory and clinical data to indicate that fully vaccinated persons are protected against the variants.

**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/>.

