

COVID-19 VACCINE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be remarkably effective in reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, including against variants. For more information, go to covid.riverstonehealth.org.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

The **mRNA vaccines** (Pfizer & Moderna) give the body instructions to make a specific piece of protein that is normally found on the virus. In response, the immune system then makes antibodies that can recognize and attack the virus in the future.

The **vector vaccine** (J&J) uses a weakened version of a different virus (adenovirus) to deliver instructions to all the cells in your body. These instructions tell your body to make the protein normally found on the virus that causes COVID-19. Then, your immune system makes antibodies that can recognize and attack the virus in the future.

HOW SAFE ARE THE VACCINES?

The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines were created with research that began years ago on similar viruses and went through the same rigorous testing process by independent scientists as other vaccines. More than 100 million Americans have been safely vaccinated.

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THEY AGAINST NEW VARIANTS?

The vaccines work well against variants of the virus, especially with a booster dose. Getting vaccinated also helps prevent new variants from emerging by slowing the spread of the virus, giving it fewer chances to mutate.

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY HAD COVID-19?

You should still get vaccinated. Getting vaccinated boosts your immunity to COVID-19, and helps to prevent the spread of the disease to other people.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS?

The majority of side effects are mild, including pain at the injection site, fever, fatigue, headache, and muscle aches. These symptoms mean that the vaccine is working, and your body is developing immunity.

WHAT IS IN THE VACCINES?

The ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and approved by the FDA. None of the vaccines contain eggs, gelatin, latex, or preservatives. All COVID-19 vaccines are free from metals such as iron, nickel, cobalt, lithium, and rare earth alloys. They are also free from manufactured products such as microelectronics, electrodes, carbon nanotubes, or nanowire semiconductors.

WHAT IF I'M PREGNANT?

The CDC strongly recommends that all people who are breastfeeding, pregnant, recently pregnant, are trying to get pregnant or might become pregnant get vaccinated to prevent serious illness from COVID-19.