

What to expect when you get your COVID-19 vaccine

When it's your turn to get a COVID-19 vaccine, we want you to be prepared. Here are some things you can expect:



Getting 2 injections. All but one of the vaccines that have been or may be approved for use require 2 doses. The doses are given several weeks apart, and the same authorized vaccine brand must be used for both – the vaccines are not interchangeable.



Receiving a vaccination card. When you get your first dose, you'll be given a card that describes the brand of vaccine. If 2 doses are required, your card will show the date for receiving the second dose of the same vaccine brand. It will also serve as proof of vaccination, so keep it in a safe place (consider taking a picture of the card as an extra safety measure).



Experiencing possible side effects. Like with other vaccines, some people have reported feeling temporary flu-like symptoms, lasting 1 to 2 days on average, after receiving a dose. The symptoms are a sign that your body is building immunity to the virus. These side effects may include:

- Pain at the injection site
- Headache
- Chills
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Joint pain

As with most regularly recommended vaccines, some side effects may be more severe in a small percentage of people. If you experience severe side effects, please contact your doctor. Although extremely rare, allergic reactions can occur. If you have a history of severe allergic reaction, if you carry an EpiPen, have had a severe reaction to any ingredients of a COVID-19 vaccine, or had a severe allergic reaction after a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, you should not receive the vaccine until you consult with your physician.



Continuing safe habits. Getting the vaccine is an important part of our efforts to slow and eventually stop the spread of COVID-19, and as experts continue to learn more about the vaccine protection, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us, such as covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and social distancing measures.