COVID-19 Vaccine
Frequently Asked Questions

What you should know about getting the COVID-19 vaccine

COVID-19 vaccination is an important tool to help us get back to normal. Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. Learn more about the benefits of getting vaccinated. Below is information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and the Georgia Department of Public Health.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated in tens of thousands of participants in clinical trials. The vaccines met FDA's rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization (EUA). Click here for more information.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19. Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

What are the most common side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

After getting vaccinated, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Learn more about what to expect after getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

How many doses of the vaccine will I need?

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one dose. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is administered intramuscularly (into the muscle, just like a flu shot) as a series of two doses, three weeks apart. The Moderna vaccine is also given intramuscularly as a series of two doses, 28 days apart. Both doses are needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer against COVID-19.

What if I only get one does of the vaccine?

It is recommended that individuals receive both doses of the vaccine to ensure full protection.

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine?
The Pfizer vaccine showed a 95% efficacy rate 7 days after the second dose. The vaccine was 94% effective in adults >65 years old. The Moderna vaccine showed a 94% efficacy rate 14% days after the second dose. These results were consistent across gender, age, and ethnicity.

If I had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to be vaccinated?
It is recommended individuals who have had and recovered from COVID-19 also should be vaccinated. Learn more about why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection than getting infected.

Do I still need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others once I receive 2 doses of vaccine?
It is important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. It will take time after the vaccination for your body to respond and make enough antibodies to protect you. This could take up to one to two weeks after your last dose. Current information suggests that it is possible that someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 may still have a mild or asymptomatic infection or spread the virus to others. So it is important to continue taking precautions.

If I am pregnant, can I get a vaccine?
Yes. If you are pregnant, you may choose to be vaccinated when it's available to you. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. Learn more at vaccination considerations for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?
Yes. People who want to get pregnant in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

How long does protection from a COVID-19 vaccine last?
We don't know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and death for a lot of people. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice. Experts are working to learn more about both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity. CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

GA COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline
This hotline is for questions about COVID-19 and COVID vaccine only, not for scheduling appointments for vaccination (888) 357-0169. Please visit Georgia Department of Public Health's website at https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-vaccine for more information.

The content in this FAQ is derived from various open and public health agency sources. All personnel are encouraged to engage their personal healthcare provider if additional information is needed.