

# What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html>

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects **may feel like flu** and **may even affect your ability** to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

## Common side effects

### On the arm where you got the shot:

- Pain
- Swelling

### Throughout the rest of your body:

- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Headache

## Helpful tips

If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

### To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot:

- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
- Use or exercise your arm.

### To reduce discomfort from fever:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Dress lightly.

## When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

## Remember

- Side effects may feel like flu and even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need 2 shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first one, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.
- It's 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. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.



## Ask your healthcare provider about getting started with v-safe

Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose

Learn more about **v-safe**.

[www.cdc.gov/vsafe](https://www.cdc.gov/vsafe)



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)