



COVID-19

Possible Side Effects After Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

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CDC now recommends that people aged 65 years and older, residents aged 18 years and older in long-term care settings, and people aged 50–64 years with [underlying medical conditions](#) **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 Vaccine at least 6 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. Other groups **may** receive a booster shot based on their individual risk and benefit. [Learn more.](#)

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 affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects.

Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are extremely unlikely following any vaccination, including COVID-19 vaccination. Vaccine monitoring has historically shown that side effects generally happen within six weeks of receiving a vaccine dose. For this reason, the FDA required each of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines to be studied for at least two months (eight weeks) after the final dose.

Common Side Effects

On the arm where you got the shot:



- Pain
- Redness
- Swelling

Throughout the rest of your body:



- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Fever
- Nausea

If you had a [severe or immediate allergic reaction](#) after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get a second dose of either of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. [Learn about getting a different type of vaccine after an allergic reaction.](#)

Helpful Tips to Relieve Side Effects

Talk to your doctor about taking over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, aspirin, or antihistamines, for any pain and discomfort you may experience after getting vaccinated. You can take these medications to relieve post-vaccination side effects if you have no other medical reasons that prevent you from taking these medications normally.

It is [not recommended](#) you take these medicines before vaccination for the purpose of trying to prevent side effects.

To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot

To reduce discomfort from fever

- Drink plenty of fluids.

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

- Dress lightly.



If You Received a Second Shot

Side effects after **your second shot** may be more intense than the ones you experienced after your first shot. These side effects are normal signs that your body is building protection and should go away within a few days.

When to Call the Doctor

In most cases, discomfort from pain or fever is a normal sign that your body is building protection. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

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



If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site, seek immediate medical care by calling 911. Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions](#).

Remember

- Side effects can affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine both need 2 shots in order to get the most protection. You should get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you [not to get it](#).
- You only need 1 shot of the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine to get the most protection. Learn more about [the different COVID-19 vaccines](#).
- It takes time for your body to [build protection after any vaccination](#). People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second shot of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or two weeks after the single-dose J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. You should keep using all the tools available [to protect yourself and others](#) until you are fully vaccinated.
- Millions of people have received COVID-19 vaccines, and no long-term side effects have been detected.
- CDC continues to closely monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines. If scientists find a connection between a safety issue and a vaccine, FDA and the vaccine manufacturer will work toward an appropriate solution to address the specific safety concern (for example, a problem with a specific lot, a manufacturing issue or the vaccine itself).

If you are fully vaccinated, you can participate in many of the activities that you did prior to the pandemic. Learn more about what you can do [when you have been fully vaccinated](#).

If you would like to report an adverse event, side effect or reaction from the COVID-19 vaccine, please use the following link: <https://vaers.hhs.gov/> [↗](#)

What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

First shot: Get health care and report any side effects.