

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

What to know before, during, and after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine

Once you are [eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine](#) in Ohio, preparation is key. Here is how to plan for vaccination, what to expect during your vaccination appointment, and what to expect after vaccination.

Before you get a COVID-19 vaccine

If you [choose to receive the vaccine](#), there are several things you will need to do to prepare.

- **Vaccinate with confidence.** Do your [vaccine research](#) using trusted sources, such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), your healthcare provider, [local health department](#) or the [Ohio Department of Health \(ODH\)](#) to find [answers to any questions](#) you have.
 - COVID-19 vaccines are [safe and effective](#). The vaccine is highly effective at preventing COVID-19, and could prevent you from getting seriously ill if you contract the virus.
 - Vaccines combined with ongoing prevention, including social distancing and wearing face masks, offer the best protection against COVID-19. Your vaccination contributes to reaching levels for herd immunity, reducing the likelihood of infection in people who don't have immunity.
- **Make sure the vaccine is safe for your medical conditions or history.** Do you have any past history of vaccine allergies? Are you currently experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or under quarantine? Are you allergic to any ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccines or polysorbate? Have you had another immunization in the previous two weeks? These are all [things you should discuss with your healthcare provider](#) before making an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you can receive the vaccine, but it is a good idea to discuss with your healthcare provider first. Read CDC guidance on [who should NOT get a COVID-19 vaccine](#).
- **Find a vaccine provider when you are eligible for vaccination.** A recently-launched search tool shows [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Locations](#) throughout Ohio who have received shipments of COVID-19 vaccines for those currently [eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine](#). Search by county or ZIP code to see a list of providers near you with websites and contact information.
- **Schedule your appointment.** You may have to make an appointment for certain locations. If appointments are booked, continue to check back frequently. With scarce vaccine supply, it will take time to vaccinate all eligible recipients. Other locations may offer vaccines on a first-come, first-served basis. These might be walk-in, drive-thru, or walk-thru clinics. Call your vaccine provider to schedule an appointment and ask what you will need to bring to your appointment. If you will receive the vaccine during a clinic with no appointment required, read or call to get instructions about eligibility, what to bring, and how the clinic will work to help you prepare before you go. If you need an interpreter, please contact the vaccine provider to see what assistance is available.

When you get vaccinated

- [Protect yourself when you are going to your appointment.](#) You may have to wait in a line indoors or outdoors, or wait in your car. Be prepared to stay at least 6 feet away from others while waiting. Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth and stay 6 feet away from others while inside, in line, or elsewhere.

- **If you have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms or think you might have been exposed to COVID-19**, notify the healthcare provider before your visit and follow instructions. You may need to reschedule after your isolation or quarantine days are over.
- **Bring identification with you:** The vaccine provider will need identification to verify your identity, name, and age. You do not need to show proof of citizenship or residency status. Your identification will still be accepted if it is expired or from another state or country. You may need additional documentation to show that you are eligible to receive your vaccine (employee ID, paystub, etc.). Check with your provider to confirm what documentation you need for your appointment. Some acceptable forms of identification are listed below:
 - Driver's license or any photo ID, regardless of expiration date or place of origin.
 - Active/retired military ID.
 - Physician statement (including shot records).
 - Census records.
 - Adoption records.
 - Naturalization certificate.
 - Birth certificate: Birth record, either original or certified copy.
 - Consulate ID or matricula consular.
 - Passport or a passport card.
 - Certificate of citizenship.
 - Permanent resident card.
 - Application for replacement naturalization/citizenship document.
 - Department of State forms.
 - Military service records (DD-214)
 - Certification of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States (FS-545)
 - Certification of Report of Birth Abroad of a United States Citizen (DS-1350)
 - Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States of America (FS-240)
 - Employment Authorization Document (I-766/EAD)
 - Transportation letter (I-797F)
- **What to tell your vaccine provider before you are given the vaccine:** You will be asked a series of questions about allergies and other health conditions to determine any risk factors or conditions you may want to discuss further. Share your history of allergies, if you have a bleeding disorder or are on a blood thinner, if you are immunocompromised or on a medicine that affects your immune system, if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, if you are breastfeeding, if you have received another COVID-19 vaccine, or if you have received any vaccine in the previous 14 days. This doesn't mean you cannot get the vaccine, but it is recommended you talk to a healthcare provider beforehand.
- **Injection location:** The COVID-19 vaccine will be administered by an injection into the deltoid muscle of the upper arm. The shot will be given about three finger widths down from your shoulder into the muscle. Wear clothing that will allow easy access to the upper arm.
- **No payment required.** There will be no out-of-pocket costs for vaccine recipients. However, if you have health insurance, you should be prepared to provide that information to the vaccine provider.
- **After your vaccination, you will be monitored for reactions.** All people who receive a COVID-19 vaccine will be monitored on site for a minimum of 15 minutes for any possible allergic reactions. People who have had severe allergic reactions in the past or who have had any type of immediate allergic reaction to a vaccine or injectable therapy will be monitored for at least 30 minutes after getting the vaccine.
- **Keep your vaccine card and fact sheet.** You should receive a vaccination card or printout that tells you which COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it. Keep this card in a safe place, and bring it with you when you return for your second dose. We recommend you take a picture of it to store on your phone for backup. You should receive a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you received. [The FDA website also includes resources in multiple languages.](#)

After you get vaccinated

- **Mild side effects are common.** Many people who have received the vaccine have reported mild side effects. The most common side effects associated with COVID-19 vaccines are similar to side effects experienced with most vaccines, such as redness, pain or swelling at the site of the injection, muscle or joint pain, fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. 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. **These are normal signs your body is building immunity.**

- **Treat side effects.** 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 at the injection site, apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area. Be sure to move and exercise your arm. To reduce discomfort from fever, drink plenty of fluids and dress lightly.
- **When to call the doctor or seek emergency care:**
 - If your side effects don't go away after a few days or intensify, contact your healthcare provider. Some vaccine side effects are similar to symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Following the observation and after you have left the vaccination site, if you think you might be having a mild allergic reaction, including itching or swelling, report the symptoms to your vaccine provider.
 - **Severe allergic reactions**, such as anaphylaxis, are rare. An allergic reaction is considered severe when it requires treatment with epinephrine or leads to hospitalization. The CDC has learned of a small number of people who have experienced these [adverse events](#) after getting a COVID-19 vaccine and will continue to [monitor the safety](#) of the vaccines.
 - **If you think you are having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site and are showing signs of anaphylaxis, including respiratory distress, dizziness, fainting, fast heart rate, hives or swelling of lips, face or throat, seek emergency medical care immediately.**
- **Report side effects/reactions:** The CDC and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) encourage vaccine recipients or providers to report possible reactions (or adverse events) to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#). The CDC also has implemented a new smartphone-based tool for vaccine recipients called [v-safe](#). Those who enroll will receive personalized health check-ins using text messages and web surveys. The tool also allows recipients to share with the CDC any side effects they experience after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. V-safe also offers second-dose reminders.
- **Schedule your second-dose appointment.** The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna vaccine require two doses. Ohioans who receive a dose of a particular vaccine must receive a second dose of the vaccine from the same manufacturer because they are not interchangeable. If your second appointment wasn't scheduled during your first-dose appointment, make a note on your calendar to schedule an appointment when it is due.
 - If you receive the [Pfizer vaccine](#), the second dose is due 21 days after the first dose.
 - If you receive the [Moderna vaccine](#), the second dose is due 28 days after the first dose.
 - Individuals should not be scheduled to receive the second dose earlier than recommended. However, second doses administered within the grace period are still considered valid. Doses inadvertently administered earlier than the grace period should not be repeated.
 - However, if it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval, the second doses of the COVID-19 vaccines may be scheduled for administration up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose. If the second dose is administered beyond these intervals, there is no need to restart the series.
- **Immunity is not immediate.** It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses may not offer full protection until a few weeks after the second dose.
- **Continue prevention measures.** After receiving your vaccination, it is still important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to prevent the spread of COVID-19. 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. Together, vaccination and ongoing prevention measures offer the best protection against COVID-19.

Updated March 4, 2021.