

Getting Vaccinated for COVID-19

June 2021



The vaccine is provided at no cost to you. The federal government will cover the cost of your vaccine. You should not be charged or billed. Your provider should also not charge you for an office visit if you go in only to get the vaccine.



There are multiple COVID-19 vaccines available. You will get either Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, or the Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen vaccine. If you get either the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, you will need to receive two doses given three to four weeks apart; the second dose should be from the same manufacturer as the first dose, and should be given at the same vaccination site as your first dose. The Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen vaccine is given as a single dose.



All of the available vaccines are safe and very effective. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the vaccines for emergency use and found them all to be highly effective with no serious safety concerns. Independent experts agree the vaccines are safe and effective.



Find a vaccination site near you. Visit www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines or call the Maine COVID-19 Community Vaccine Line at 1-888-445-4111. (For interpreter services, say your language when the call is answered. Deaf or hard of hearing individuals can dial 711 and ask to be connected to 1-888-445-4111.)



You may feel side effects. Like other routine vaccines, you may get a sore arm, fever, headaches, or fatigue after getting vaccinated. These are signs that the vaccine is working.



Stay safe. After you get the vaccine, wear your mask, stay six feet (two meters) apart, and avoid gatherings to protect those who have not yet been vaccinated.

What vaccines are currently available?

There are three vaccines currently available:

- Pfizer-BioNTech
- Moderna
- Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen

All three vaccines have been approved by the FDA for emergency use. Other vaccines may be available soon.

Who should get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting COVID-19. It is your choice to get the vaccine. If you decide to get it, you should tell your vaccine provider if you:

- Have a history of severe allergic reactions
- Have a fever
- Have a bleeding disorder or take blood thinners
- Are immunocompromised or are on a medicine that affects your immune system
- Are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are lactating
- Have received another COVID-19 vaccine

You should not get the vaccine if you have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or to any ingredient in the vaccine.

You must be at least 16 years old to get the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, and 18 years old to get the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen vaccines.

What is in the COVID-19 vaccine?

All three vaccines contain the active ingredient of either messenger RNA (mRNA) or DNA along with fat, salts, and sugars to protect the active part of the vaccine and help it work better in the body. None of the vaccines contain live COVID-19 virus, or other preservatives or substances. You cannot get COVID from getting the vaccine.

What happens after I get vaccinated?

You will need to wait 15 to 30 minutes before leaving the vaccine site so your vaccine provider can help you if you do have an allergic reaction or other side effects. While you wait, you can sign up for v-safe to report any side effects and get a reminder for your second dose: vsafe.cdc.gov.

It is common to have side effects one to three days after getting the vaccine. Common side effects are tiredness, muscle pain, pain in the arm where you got your shot, fever, headache, joint pain, chills, nausea, or vomiting. If your symptoms don't go away within three to four days, contact your doctor or clinic. You or your vaccine provider can also report side effects to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS): vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html.

Call 911 if you have an allergic reaction after leaving the clinic. Signs of an allergic reaction may include difficulty breathing, swelling of your face and throat, fast heartbeat, a bad rash all over your body, dizziness, and weakness.

If you get either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, be sure to make an appointment for your second dose. You'll need to come back in three to four weeks to get your second dose.

After you get the vaccine, keep wearing your mask, stay six feet (two meters) apart, and avoid gatherings to protect those who are not yet vaccinated. It will take up to two weeks after you have completed your vaccine for full protection (two weeks after your second dose for Pfizer or Moderna, or after your single dose of Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen).

Visit www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines for more information.