



COVID-19 Vaccines Frequently Asked Questions

Michigan.gov/Coronavirus

The information in this document will change frequently as we learn more about COVID-19 vaccines. There is a lot we are learning as the pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines evolve. The approach in Michigan will adapt as we learn more. Updated April 8, 2021.

Why COVID-19 vaccination is important

Will COVID-19 vaccination help keep me from getting COVID-19?

Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will also help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. Early data show the vaccines do help keep people with no symptoms from spreading COVID-19, but we are learning more as more people get vaccinated. Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Stopping the pandemic requires using all the tools we have available.

What to expect when you get vaccinated

Do I have to pay for the vaccine?

No. You will not be charged any fees for the vaccine, regardless of whether you have health insurance coverage or not. If you do have insurance coverage, the vaccine provider may charge your insurance an administrative fee, but YOU will not have to pay anything. (If you are uninsured, this fee will come from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider's Relief Fund, NOT you.)

Do I need an ID or documentation of chronic conditions, employment, or disability to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

In some instances, you may be asked to provide information to verify the county you live in, get you registered, or bill insurance. You may also be asked about your high risk condition (like chronic conditions, employment or disability) during the registration process. **However, identification/documentation from a healthcare provider is not required to get a vaccine.**

Can I choose which vaccine I get?

While supplies are scarce, it is unlikely that you will be able to choose which vaccine you receive from your medical provider. You should not wait; you should take whichever vaccine is available to you. CDC does not make a preference for one vaccine over another. Individuals 16 and 17 years of age must receive the Pfizer vaccine only. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines are only recommended for those 18 years and older.

Do minors ages 16-17 need consent to receive vaccinations?

Yes. Minors ages 16 and 17 will need a parent or legal guardian to accompany them to their appointment in order to provide consent to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In some counties, the parent or legal guardian may be able to provide consent through a note or a phone call that has been verified by two nurses. Check with the vaccine provider first to see if this is an option where you live.

Will more than one dose of COVID-19 vaccine be required?

It depends on which vaccine you receive. Some COVID-19 vaccines require two doses to complete the series and to build the best immune response. If a second dose is required, it is very important that you receive the vaccine from the same manufacturer both times and get the doses within the required time frame to ensure the best protection from COVID-19.

- The Pfizer and Moderna vaccine require two doses. If you receive the Pfizer vaccine the second dose needs to be 21 days after the first dose, and the second dose of the Moderna vaccine needs to be 28 days after the first.
- The Johnson & Johnson vaccine only requires one dose to build the best immune response.

How will I be reminded to get the second dose?

MDHHS plans to use multiple ways to notify you of your second dose, if you receive a vaccine which requires a second dose. COVID-19 Vaccination Record Cards (reminder cards) will be provided when you receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The card provides room for a written reminder for a second-dose appointment. If you have a smartphone, consider taking a photo of your vaccination record card and entering the date the next vaccine dose is due in your calendar. MDHHS also sends text messaging reminders prior to your second dose. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has the V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker application for your phone that can send you a reminder.

To ensure the best protection from COVID-19, it is very important to not skip the second dose if you received a COVID-19 vaccine that requires two doses. The second dose must be from the same vaccine manufacturer, so it will be important to ensure that where you receive your second dose has the right vaccine. If you can, it would be best to follow up with the same provider who gave you your first shot.

What should I do if I miss my second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine?

Even though the supply is limited, your second dose of vaccine has been set aside to ensure you can receive it in the recommended time frame. If an extraordinary event makes it impossible to get the second dose on time, it may be administered up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose. Beyond six weeks, there is limited data about how effective the vaccine will be, but getting the second dose is still your best protection, so be sure to get your second dose. If you think you will have to miss your appointment for your second dose, call to reschedule right away.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine does not require a second dose.

How will I know which brand of vaccine I received?

You will receive a COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card which will tell you which brand of vaccine you received and when you are due for a second dose, if required. It is important to keep this card.

What can I do if I lose my COVID-19 vaccination record card, it is damaged, or if I did not receive a COVID-19 vaccination record card?

If you did not receive a COVID-19 vaccination record card, contact the facility where you were vaccinated and request either a completed card or a print out from the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) if it was administered in Michigan, be given or sent to you. Both are official vaccination records.

One great suggestion is to take a picture of your COVID-19 vaccination record card on your mobile phone. This way you have a record of your card in case you lose the actual COVID-19 vaccination record card. As an additional measure, you could laminate your vaccination card to prevent damage.

Why does the Johnson & Johnson vaccine require only one dose, when the other vaccines require two doses?

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has received an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for one-dose and has shown to be effective through studies. It is currently undergoing studies for effectiveness with 2 doses to see how this vaccine will compare to other COVID-19 vaccines. At this time, you are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the 1-dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.

What is the difference between an mRNA vaccine and an adenovirus vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccines help our bodies develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without us having to get the illness. Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection, but with all types of vaccines, the body is left with knowing how to fight the virus in the future. Neither vaccine uses a live virus – you cannot get COVID-19 from a COVID-19 vaccine.

- **mRNA vaccines give instructions to your cells to make a harmless piece of spike protein from SARS-CoV-2** – the virus that causes COVID-19. Recognizing that the piece of protein doesn't belong there, your immune system builds antibodies and activates T-cells to destroy it. In the future, your cells remember how to destroy the protein, protecting you from the virus.
- **Adenovirus vaccine is a type of vector vaccine. This vaccine uses adenovirus (the virus that causes the common cold) to deliver instructions about COVID-19 to your cells through a piece of spike protein.** Your immune system then builds antibodies and activates T-cells to destroy it. In the future, your cells remember how to destroy the protein, protecting you from the virus.

Are the side effects different?

No matter what vaccine you get, it is normal to have mild side effects like fever, chills, fatigue, and headache as well as pain and swelling in the arm where you received the vaccine. This is your immune system learning how to fight the virus, and indicates the vaccine is working.

Is one of the COVID-19 vaccines proven to be safer than the other?

All COVID-19 vaccines go through the same process to receive emergency use authorization (EUA) from the Federal Drug Administration (FDA). There is no data to suggest one vaccine is safer than another. At this time CDC is not recommending for certain groups to receive one vaccine over another. The recommendation is to receive the vaccine that is currently available to you.

Can any doctor's office, clinic, or pharmacy offer the COVID-19 vaccine?

Doctor's offices, clinics, and pharmacies who are enrolled in the [vaccination program](#) can offer the vaccine when the vaccine becomes available to them. As supply increases, doctor's offices, clinics, and pharmacies will be able to obtain the vaccine directly, hopefully in late Spring 2021.

If I already had COVID-19, should I get vaccinated? Shouldn't I be immune?

Yes, you should still get the COVID-19 vaccine, even if you have had COVID-19. There is not enough information currently available to say if or for how long after infection someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again; this is called natural immunity. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long, but more studies are needed to better understand this.

People who have had COVID-19 can still get a vaccine. CDC recommends getting it after you have recovered. You should check with your health care provider if you have questions.

Do I need to keep wearing a mask after I get vaccinated?

Yes. Michiganders should continue to wear masks, social distance from those not in their household and wash their hands, even after receiving vaccine. More information is available on the CDC website in their [FAQ document](#).

Will I have to quarantine and miss work after I get the vaccine?

Getting the vaccine does not require quarantine, but it typically takes a few weeks for the body to build an immune response after getting the vaccine. This means it is possible you could be infected with COVID-19 just before or after vaccination. If you believe you have been exposed or are having symptoms you should quarantine until you talk to your doctor and get tested.

Quarantine instructions for people who are fully vaccinated:

Fully vaccinated persons who meet criteria will no longer be required to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19. Individuals should keep their COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to confirm their exemption from quarantine. The immune period begins two weeks after vaccination:

- If given a two-dose vaccine series (Pfizer, Moderna) it takes about two weeks after the second dose to build immunity.
- If given one dose of a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson), it takes about two weeks after that dose to build immunity.

Based on the schedules above, the individual may be exempt from quarantine, **provided the individual does not have any COVID-19 symptoms**. This exemption does not apply to vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings.

Safety of the vaccine

Is the vaccine safe?

We understand that some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated. Safety is the first priority in vaccine authorization or approval. The FDA has authorized the emergency use of each of the three COVID-19 vaccines after determining the vaccines meet FDA requirements. And it's important to know that all three of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines were proven to be safe and effective in reducing the risk of severe illness, hospitalizations and death as caused by the virus. While the COVID-19 vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine authorized or approved for use.

More information about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine is available at the [CDC Vaccine Benefits website](#) and the [CDC Vaccine Safety website](#).

How can a safe vaccine be made so quickly?

Vaccine development typically takes many years. However, scientists had already begun research for coronavirus vaccines during previous outbreaks caused by related coronaviruses (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). That earlier research provided a head start for rapid development of vaccines to protect against infection with COVID-19. No steps were skipped in the development of this vaccine but modifications to the process were made to shorten the timeline without sacrificing safety, such as:

- Overlapping phase I and phase II clinical trials. Phase I studies include a small number of people and evaluate whether the vaccine causes an immune response and is safe. Scientists looked at data from a group of people in phase I as phase II was progressing to make these evaluations.
- While completing large phase III trials, manufacturers began producing the vaccine, so that if it were shown to be safe and effective, they would have large numbers of doses ready.
- While waiting for a vaccine to be ready, many other aspects of vaccine delivery were prepared (e.g., developing plans for how to distribute the first, limited quantities available, ensuring adequate supplies for distributing and administering vaccine.)

Can this vaccine give me COVID-19?

No. This vaccine gives your body a code which helps it recognize the virus, so your body can fight it off in the future.

Can I get other vaccines at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine?

CDC recommends that no other vaccine be given 14 days before or after you get the COVID-19 vaccine. However, in situations such as the need to vaccinate with a tetanus-toxoid-containing vaccination as part of wound management or rabies vaccination for post-exposure prophylaxis, etc., CDC does recommend that COVID-19 and other vaccines may be administered within a shorter period.

Can I be vaccinated if I have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined or isolated for suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2?

In general, the people scheduled for COVID-19 who are exposed to SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19 illness) and quarantined should reschedule vaccination after their quarantine period has ended in order to avoid the risk of exposing vaccinators to the virus. People diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 infection (COVID-19 illness) before a scheduled vaccination should wait to be vaccinated until after recovery and the end of the isolation period to avoid the risk of exposing vaccinators to the virus.

More information:

- [Ask the Experts about COVID-19 – IAC experts answer Q&As](#)
- [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the US](#)

Can women who are pregnant get the COVID-19 vaccine?

The CDC has recommended that pregnant women and women planning to become pregnant may choose to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. A conversation between patient and provider may assist with decisions to receive COVID-19 vaccine, however, it is not required before vaccination.

Are there any tests people have to get before getting the vaccine?

The CDC is not recommending a routine pregnancy test or an antibody blood test for COVID-19 before you get the vaccine. You should talk with your health care provider about any questions you have due to your personal, specific medical history.

Does the vaccine have any side effects?

After COVID-19 vaccination, you may have some mild side effects. This is a normal sign that your body is building protection. The side effects from COVID-19 vaccination may feel like flu and might even affect your ability to do daily activities, should go away in a few days. Your arm may be sore, red, or warm to the touch. You may have a low-grade fever, headache, and just a general feeling of “not yourself”. These are signs that your immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to, which is produce an immune response for you to have protection against this disease.

Can people with a history of allergic reactions get the vaccine?

Most people who have food or environmental allergies can still get the vaccine. Prior to getting vaccinated, talk to your health care provider if you have had any severe reactions to medicines or vaccines in the past. Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccines and rare and severe allergic reactions](#).

How are side effects being tracked?

The CDC and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) manage the [Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System](#) (VAERS), a national system to detect any possible symptoms or side effects that occur after someone has had a vaccine. Anyone who had a vaccine can report concerns to VAERS.

What is V-safe?

When you get your vaccine, you will get a link to access the “V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker” for your phone. Through V-safe, you can quickly tell the CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. CDC may follow up by phone to get more information. V-safe will also remind you to get the second COVID-19 vaccine dose when needed.

Vaccine distribution/prioritization

When will the vaccine be available?

Michigan began receiving vaccine in Michigan the week of December 14th.

Who is eligible to be vaccinated?

All Michiganders over the age of 16 years are eligible to be vaccinated. Priority should continue to be given to those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and those whose work increases their potential for exposure.

Individuals 16 and 17 years of age must receive the Pfizer vaccine only. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines are only recommended for those 18 years and older.

I am in one of the previous priority groups but haven't been vaccinated, can I still get a vaccine now that it has opened to everyone 16 years and older?

Yes. As we move forward and open our vaccination services more, we can still ensure that all persons who were eligible from previous established phases and those who missed opportunities during any phase can be vaccinated. In our initial planning we followed ACIP guidance that stated it is not necessary to vaccinate all individuals in one phase before initiating the next phase; phases may overlap. Now that we are open to everyone, we will still work to ensure anyone who was previously eligible receives their vaccine.

I am a Health Care Provider, and I haven't been vaccinated yet, what do I do?

If you are a health care provider who hasn't been vaccinated and you are part of a larger health system, you need to reach out to your employer to see if they have a plan in place on when and how you can get vaccinated. They will help guide you through their COVID-19 vaccination plan and assist you with when and how you can receive vaccine.

If you are not part of a health system and need to be vaccinated, you should register to be vaccinated as soon as possible. Go to Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine to find out how to schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine.

How do I sign up to get vaccinated?

To find a vaccine visit Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine. You can also:

- Check the website of your local health department or hospital to find out their process or for registration forms; or
- Check additional vaccination sites, such as local pharmacies like Meijer, Rite Aid or Cardinal Health (U.P. residents); or
- Residents who don't have access to the internet or who need assistance navigating the vaccine scheduling process can call the COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136 (press 1), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. or can call 2-1-1.

It is important to note that, while supplies are increasing, there remains a limited amount of vaccine available, so there may be a waitlist for available appointments.

I have heard about drive through vaccine clinics, where do I find one?

Vaccination sites will be coordinated through the local health department and may include what are called drive through clinics. Vaccines are delivered while you remain in your car and complete the paperwork as well as the required observation time after you have received your vaccination. Local health departments will communicate availability when these locations are available based on vaccine supplies.

How are people who are homeless receiving the vaccine?

Local health departments will coordinate with Federally Qualified Health Centers and other providers to administer the vaccine to homeless individuals.

How are tribal populations receiving the vaccine?

Vaccine will be administered to tribal members through their tribal health clinics.

How are seasonal/migrant workers receiving the vaccine?

Local health departments coordinate with Federally Qualified Health Centers and other providers to administer the vaccine. [More information on food processing and agricultural workers.](#)

Why are children younger than age 16 not included in the vaccine plan?

We await further guidance on whether young children will be recommended for vaccination. Vaccination of young children is not recommended because of limited data on the vaccine safety and efficacy in this group at this time. Young children should still make sure they are up to date on their other important life-saving recommended immunizations.

Can I get the second dose of the vaccine in a different state than where I got the first dose?

If you receive a two dose vaccine series (Pfizer or Moderna) it's important to get the second dose of the same vaccine in the time frame required for your vaccine. You might be able to get that in a different state, but you should check before traveling to ensure availability in that state. Consult that state's COVID-19 vaccine website. Make sure you have your immunization records, including the card you were given when you received your first dose.

Additional Vaccine Information

Do the COVID-19 vaccines contain fetal cells?

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain fetal cells or DNA, even if a fetal cell line is used during any part of vaccine development and manufacturing. The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine used a historic fetal cell line (using the PER.C6 line) to produce and manufacture the vaccine.

The mRNA vaccines (those by Pfizer and Moderna) did not use a fetal cell line to produce or manufacture the vaccine. However, a fetal cell line was used in a very early phase to confirm efficacy prior to production and manufacturing.

Additional information may be found at:

- [COVID-19 Vaccines & Fetal Cells](#)
- [Questions and Answers about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Vaccine Ingredients-Fetal Tissues](#)
- [Immunization Action Coalition](#)
- [Charlotte LOZIER Institute](#)
- [Science Article](#)

Will getting a COVID-19 vaccine protect against new variants?

All three variants of concern are thought to have a higher rate of transmission than the SARS-CoV-2 that has been circulating across the U.S. for months. This is concerning because more cases of COVID-19 would increase the number of people who need clinical care. Vaccination remains an important tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19, in addition to other protective actions like mask wearing, hand washing, and social distancing. Studies about the effectiveness of vaccines against new variants are ongoing.

- B.1.1.7: There is little indication that B.1.1.7 exhibits any changes in the virus that would impact the effectiveness of current vaccines. B.1.1.7 has been identified in Michigan.
- B.1.351: Less is known about the B.1.351 variant at this time. The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine was tested in South Africa where the B.1.351 variant was spreading rampantly, and the vaccine offered some protection against the virus. Additional studies are needed to fully understand potential impacts of the variant strain on vaccine efficacy. The first case of B.1.351 in Michigan was identified March 8, 2021.
- P.1: There is evidence to suggest that some of the mutations in the P.1 variant may affect the ability of antibodies (from natural infection or vaccination) to recognize and neutralize the virus, but additional studies are needed. The first case of P.1 in Michigan was identified March 31, 2021.

Variants of concern are being closely investigated and additional studies are ongoing.

Continuation of public health strategies such as vaccination, physical distancing, use of masks, hand hygiene, and isolation and quarantine are essential to limit the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 and protect the public.

How much vaccine is going to FQHCs, otherwise known as Community Health Centers?

The amount of COVID-19 vaccine ordered each week for Michigan providers is available on our website ([Coronavirus - COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard \(michigan.gov\)](#)). FQHCs have been identified by the federal government and the state of Michigan as an important provider to reach vulnerable populations. The very mission of an FQHC is to provide primary care services in underserved communities. The federal government is providing vaccine to some facilities directly, Michigan is providing vaccine to those FQHCs that were not covered by the federal program.

Protecting your privacy

What information will be collected about me when I receive the vaccine?

By reviewing the vaccine specific Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) document and agreeing to be vaccinated you are allowing your information such as name, address, date of birth and the type of vaccine administered be shared to the state's registry called the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR).

Will information collected about me be shared with anyone?

The Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) database is only visible by approved medical professionals, staff, and local health departments for vaccination purposes, and they must sign the MCIR Usage Agreement, which governs protection of your information.

Michigan will share vaccination information with the CDC but in de-identified aggregate form (i.e., not containing person-level information such as name, date of birth, or address).

Where can I get more information?

- More information is available about coronavirus on the [State of Michigan coronavirus website](#).
- More information is available about COVID-19 vaccines on the [State of Michigan COVID-19 Vaccination website](#).
- If you have additional questions, you can contact the COVID Hotline at 1-888-535-6136.
- For more information about coronavirus review: [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- Providers who wish to enroll in [Michigan's COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#).