

COVID-19 vaccine patient frequently asked questions

Why should I get vaccinated?

Getting a vaccine is important to protect yourself and your loved ones. More than 500,000 Americans—including more than 12,000 Hoosiers—have died from COVID-19. To end the pandemic, it will require the majority of the population to be vaccinated.

Do you recommend the vaccine?

Yes, you should be vaccinated to protect yourself and your loved ones by getting vaccinated against COVID-19. IU Health will only offer vaccines once authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the data is reviewed by our team of clinical experts. We will only offer vaccines that our physicians feel confident in accepting themselves.

When will I be able to get the vaccine?

While specific dates have not been announced, the state will continue to prioritize by age groups as more vaccine is available. Vaccines will likely be broadly available to the general public late spring into early summer.

As we receive more information, we will provide updates through the IU Health newsletter, the COVID-19 Resources Center on iuhealth.org and direct communication from your physician as appropriate.

What are the side effects?

After vaccination, you may have some mild to moderate side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness and headache.

How effective are the vaccines?

All vaccines currently approved for distribution in the U.S. are safe and highly effective at preventing against severe illness from COVID-19. Data from clinical trials demonstrate that the Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective and Moderna 94.1% effective at preventing COVID-19 among adults at this time. Both Moderna and Pfizer vaccines offer full protection about two weeks after the second dose.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine only requires a single dose and protection against moderate/severe disease starts about two weeks after vaccination. U.S. clinical trial data showed the J&J vaccine provided 85% protection against severe illness.

Clinical trial data also demonstrated that all three vaccines are highly effective (nearly 100%) at preventing hospitalization, and completely effective (100%) at preventing death from COVID-19.

How do I register for a vaccine once I am eligible?

If you are eligible for a vaccine, you can now register online at ourshot.in.gov, or by calling **211**.

Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. The vaccines do not contain live virus.

Why were the COVID-19 vaccines approved so quickly?

Though the COVID-19 vaccines were developed and approved very quickly, it's important to note that the clinical efficacy and quality of the product was not compromised. The COVID-19 vaccines are some of the most effective vaccines we've ever seen. Through the collaborative efforts of national and international organizations, many efficiencies were developed in the coordination of the process.

Some of these include:

- The technology does not require months of virus growth in the lab.
- Because COVID-19 was widespread, a large number of clinical trial participants were quickly enrolled within weeks instead of months or years.
- The vaccines were manufactured 'at risk.' This means the vaccines were manufactured while awaiting FDA approval so it could be shipped to hospitals within hours. Typically manufacturing that many doses would happen after approval.

These efficiencies helped to reduce the time it required for hospitals and other healthcare facilities to receive the vaccine.

Is the vaccine safe?

Yes, the vaccines are safe and effective. The clinical trials included large numbers of patients, and the data was made public. This allowed our team of experts to review the results, confirming it is safe.

The clinical trials have been extensive, involving tens of thousands of people across gender, age, race and ethnicity. The Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines showed effective results with only mild to moderate side effects.

How much will the vaccine cost me?

The COVID-19 vaccines will be free to everyone, and there will not be a co-pay charged to you. If you have insurance, we will collect the information to bill a small administration fee, but no cost will be charged to you.

Do I have to wear a mask and maintain social distancing after I get the vaccine?

It is important to continue wearing a mask and maintaining social distancing even though you or someone close may have received the vaccine. Your body begins to build immunity after the injection, so it can take a few weeks to reach full effectiveness. We also don't know how long the immunity from this vaccine lasts. Therefore, these measures should continue to be taken until we have more information about this and until the majority of the population is vaccinated.

