

**COVID-19
VACCINES**

JUST THE FACTS



TEXAS MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

Vaccines Defend What Matters.

Physicians Caring for Texans

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1 COVID-19 vaccines have been deemed safe by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Serious side effects are extremely rare.

The most common side effects are sore arm, feeling tired, headache, body aches, or a mild fever. These side effects usually last no more than two days. The symptoms are the result of the vaccine working to strengthen the immune system. If you have a history of severe allergic reactions to vaccines, talk to your doctor to see if a COVID-19 vaccine is appropriate for you. Out of the billions of vaccines already given, few instances of serious side effects have emerged. The U.S. has a rigorous safety program for vaccines to watch for side effects.

2 The vaccines will let us get back to spending time with family and friends.

The more people get vaccinated, the more difficult it would be for the virus to infect others and spread the disease, even to people unable to get the vaccine. This is called herd or community immunity. Until we can understand if those who received the vaccine can spread the virus, you should still wear a face mask when around others, practice social distancing, and frequently wash your hands. The more people get vaccinated, the less likely new and dangerous forms of the virus will develop.

3 The vaccines can provide long-term protection, even if you already have had COVID-19.

Although it is possible to get reinfected, people who have had COVID-19 may benefit from the long-term protections against severe complications. Getting the vaccine reduces the risk of getting extremely sick, hospital stays, and even death. To help stop the pandemic, we need to use all the tools and information available. This includes wearing face masks, practicing social distancing, staying home when you feel sick, and getting the vaccine if you can. The complications and risks from COVID-19 infection are far greater than the few risks from getting vaccinated.

4 Vaccines do not give you COVID-19.

None of the vaccines available now or in development contain a live virus. The mRNA vaccine contains a “blueprint” for a small (nonliving) piece of the virus, which your body will use to build up antibodies against COVID-19 if you are exposed to the actual virus.

5 There is no evidence vaccines affect fertility or harm an ongoing pregnancy.

Clinical data show no effect on the health of a pregnant individual or fetus. However, complications from COVID-19 can pose a serious risk to pregnancy and the mother’s health. CDC has recommended the COVID-19 vaccine for those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future. If you are pregnant and have questions about the vaccine, discuss your concerns with a physician.

6 COVID-19 vaccines do not alter your DNA.

The mRNA contained in the vaccine does not interact with DNA in any way. The mRNA acts as a blueprint for a small, nonliving part of the virus that our bodies use to build up an immune response. Then if the virus enters our body, our immune system can act quickly.

7 The science behind mRNA vaccines has been around for several years and has been clinically proven to be safe and effective.

These vaccines were developed quickly because they had high priority and many scientists worked on them together. No shortcuts were taken in developing the vaccines, which were required to meet a high standard for safety and effectiveness before they became available to the public.

8 COVID-19 vaccines do not contain any microchips, implants, tracking devices, or other questionable substances.

COVID-19 vaccines currently available and in development do not contain any new ingredients that have not already been used in manufacturing vaccines. The vaccine does not contain any solid implants or fetal tissue.

Additional Resources for Physicians

**Talking to Patients About Vaccine vs. Natural Immunity
Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Patients**

www.texmed.org/Coronavirus