Transplant recipients, people living with kidney disease, and those on dialysis are at high risk of having a severe COVID-19 infection that requires hospitalization. The National Kidney Foundation, American Society of Nephrology, and American Society of Transplantation recommend that people with kidney disease or kidney transplant be vaccinated for COVID-19.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your body’s natural defenses so your body will be ready to fight a virus if you are exposed (also called immunity).

Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are very effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. These vaccines cannot give you the COVID-19.

About the vaccines
Currently, three vaccines have received Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the FDA and they are all recommended by the CDC. The vaccine from Pfizer-BioNTech was the first vaccine to be granted EUA. The second vaccine is from Moderna, and the third is from Johnson & Johnson.

Effectiveness rates
The reported effectiveness rates of the three vaccines that have received EUA are very good. At this time, it is not known if any patients with chronic kidney disease, kidney transplant recipients, or people on dialysis participated in any of the COVID-19 clinical trials.

Most doctors agree that the benefits of the vaccine for people with chronic kidney disease, kidney transplant recipients, and people on dialysis are much greater than the risk of serious disease or complications from COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccine comparison chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of vaccine</th>
<th>Pfizer-BioNTech</th>
<th>Moderna</th>
<th>Johnson &amp; Johnson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mRNA</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dosage</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>1 dose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days apart</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in preventing symptomatic COVID-19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the near future, the goal is for people age 16 and younger to be able to easily receive a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible. Pfizer recently announced that its trial in adolescents ages 12-15 is fully enrolled and may be ready to apply for Emergency Use Approval from the FDA in the first half of 2021. The COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna has been authorized for use in people age 18 and over, is currently enrolling adolescents ages 12 to 17 in clinical trials.
Allergic reactions
The CDC recommends that people with a history of severe allergic reactions – not related to vaccines or injectable medications, such as foods, animals, venom, environmental, or latex allergies – should get vaccinated. People with a history of allergies to oral medications or a family history of severe allergic reactions should also get vaccinated.

If you experience a severe allergic reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine, vaccination providers should provide rapid care and call for emergency medical services. You should continue to be monitored in a medical facility for at least several hours.

Misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines
There are many false stories about the COVID-19 vaccines, which means it’s very important to make sure you get your information from trusted and reliable sources. These are some false information examples that you may have heard:

I can get COVID-19 from the COVID-19 vaccine.
**NOT TRUE** None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

I’ve already had COVID-19, so I don’t need to get a vaccine.
**NOT TRUE** Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, you should get the vaccine even if you’ve already had COVID-19. At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having had COVID-19, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Natural immunity may not last very long.

The COVID-19 vaccine will change my DNA.
**NOT TRUE** The vaccines that are currently available for adults in the United States, do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. None of the ingredients in a COVID-19 vaccine enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the vaccine cannot affect or interact with your DNA in any way. Instead, the vaccines work with your body’s natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease.

Continue good safety practices after vaccination
*It takes time for your body to build protection after receiving your COVID-19 vaccination. You may not be well-protected until a week or two after you have been fully vaccinated.*

Even after you get your vaccine, you will need to continue doing your best to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your community. The best protection is to:

- Wear a mask that tightly covers your nose and mouth
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol
- Wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from other people you do not live with

Right now, experts don’t know how long the vaccine will protect you, so it’s a good idea to continue following the guidelines from CDC and your state’s health department. We also know not everyone will be able to get vaccinated right away, so it’s still important to protect yourself and others.

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.