



# COVID-19 VACCINES

**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).

Many experts also think getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill if you do get COVID-19. ***These vaccines cannot give you 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

While the effectiveness rates of COVID-19 vaccines are very good, we now know that people who are on immunosuppression medications for the treatment of advanced kidney disease and kidney transplant recipients, may not receive the same level of protection, also known as antibody immunity, from the COVID-19 vaccine as people who are not on immunosuppressive medication.

While more research is needed to learn more about the effectiveness in people with advanced CKD, those on dialysis, and transplant recipients — these vaccines have been demonstrated to be safe in this population.

The National Kidney Foundation urges patients with advanced kidney disease, including transplant and dialysis patients and patients requiring immunosuppression for treatment of kidney disease, to continue masking and practicing social distancing.

***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

	Pfizer-BioNTech	Moderna	Johnson & Johnson
Type of vaccine	mRNA	mRNA	Viral Vector
Dosage	2 doses	2 doses	1 dose
Days apart	21	28	—
Effectiveness in preventing symptomatic COVID-19	95%	95%	66%
Minimum age	12	18	18

In the near future, the goal is for people age 12 and younger to be able to easily receive a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has already received EUA for adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16. The COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna has received EUA 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

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

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

