

# Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

## COVID-19 VACCINATION FAQs

### Has the COVID vaccine been approved?

On December 11, 2020, the FDA issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to begin using the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

### Who is authorized to receive the Pfizer vaccine?

The interim recommendation is anyone 16 years of age and older, for the prevention of COVID-19.

### How many doses is the Pfizer vaccine?

There are two doses and they must be taken 21 days apart. The second shot is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer against this serious disease.

### How effective is the Pfizer vaccine?

It is 95% effective against COVID-19 beginning 28 days after the first dose.

### Are the vaccines safe?

Clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines must first show they are safe and effective before any vaccine can be authorized or approved for use. The known and potential benefits of the vaccine must outweigh the known and potential risks of the vaccine for use under what is known as the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The EUA was issued on December 11, 2020.

### Can I get sick from taking the Pfizer vaccine?

No serious safety concerns have been reported. The shots, however, routinely elicit a temporary reaction that in many people feel much like the flu. However, the CDC has developed a new tool, [v-safe](#), as an additional layer of safety monitoring to increase our ability to rapidly detect any safety issues with COVID-19 vaccines.

**V-safe** is a new smartphone-based, after-vaccination health checker for people who receive COVID-19 vaccines. **V-safe** is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through **v-safe**, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information. And **v-safe** will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one. Your participation in CDC's **v-safe** makes a difference — it helps keep COVID-19 vaccines safe.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can I catch COVID-19 through the process of getting vaccinated?**

There is no way to catch COVID-19 from this type of vaccine because the vaccine is not made of a virus.

### **Will the vaccine make me immune from ever contracting COVID-19?**

The vaccine will provide some immunity, but it is not clear how long the immunity will last. The COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you by creating an antibody response without having to experience the sickness. Both natural immunity, obtained from being “recovered” from COVID-19, and immunity produced by a vaccine, are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and the CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

### **When will the vaccine be available to ROP staff?**

All sites will follow the schedule of their state and county Health Department, but it is expected that ROP staff will have the vaccine available in Spring 2021. In addition, the goal is for everyone to be able to easily get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as large enough quantities are available. Once vaccine is widely available, the plan is to have several thousand vaccination providers offering COVID-19 vaccines in doctors’ offices, retail pharmacies such as CVS and Walgreens, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers.

### **If ROP is not going to mandate employees to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, why should I take it?**

Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill, even if you do get COVID. It may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

### **What does the COVID vaccine cost?**

Cost is not an obstacle to getting vaccinated. Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. However, vaccination providers, such as physician offices and pharmacies, may be able to charge administration fees for giving the shot. Vaccination providers can get this fee reimbursed by the patient’s public or private insurance company.

### **Is the COVID vaccine an important tool to fight this pandemic?**

Yes, it is. It is important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. As a

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reminder: cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

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