

Fact or Myth About the COVID-19 Vaccines

The vaccines were developed too quickly to be safe. **Myth!**

Fact: Scientists have been working to develop vaccines against viruses for many years. This research helped speed up the development of the current COVID-19 vaccines.

The COVID-19 vaccines went through 3 phases of clinical trials to make sure they are safe and effective. The phases overlapped each other

so the vaccines could be used as quickly as possible. No trial phases were skipped.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration continue to monitor the safety of the vaccines and alert the public about unusual side effects.

The vaccine will give me COVID-19. **Myth!**

Fact: You can't get the COVID-19 virus from the vaccine. When you get the vaccine, your immune system does the same work to build protection as it would if you were infected with the virus. That is why you might have some side effects from the vaccine.

The symptoms after the vaccine are likely to last only 1 to 2 days. They are much less severe than getting the virus itself.

If you don't have any side effects, that doesn't mean the vaccine wasn't effective.

The vaccine will alter (change) my DNA. **Myth!**

Fact: COVID-19 vaccines don't change or interact with your DNA in any way. Both mRNA and viral vector vaccines cause your immune system to make antibodies. These protect you against the COVID-19 virus.

The vaccines do this without entering the nucleus of your cells, where your DNA (genetic material) lives.

- Messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines teach your

cells how to make a protein (or a piece of a protein) that causes your immune system to make antibodies. This protects you if the real virus enters your body. mRNA vaccines **don't** use a live virus.

- Viral vector vaccines use a modified version of a different virus (**not** the COVID-19 virus). The "spike" protein is only found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. Your immune system senses what it thinks is an infection and makes antibodies to fight it.

I had COVID-19. I don't need to get the vaccine. **Myth!**

Fact: It's recommended that you get the vaccine. There isn't enough information to say if, or for how long after infection, someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again. This is called natural immunity.

Evidence is starting to show that people get better protection by being fully vaccinated compared with having had COVID-19. It is unknown how long your protection lasts after being infected with COVID-19. You can get COVID-19 again.

(over)

The vaccines don't work. **Myth!**

Fact: COVID-19 vaccines protect people from getting infected and severely ill. This means they are less likely to need a hospital stay or die from the infection. But no vaccines work 100% of the time. Some people who are fully vaccinated may still get sick. These are called breakthrough cases.

With these cases, symptoms tend to be less severe than they are in people who aren't vaccinated. People who have breakthrough

cases can spread the virus even if they don't have symptoms.

Your body needs some time to build protection after getting the vaccine. You are fully vaccinated 2 weeks after your second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine and 2 weeks after your single dose of Janssen vaccine. You could still get COVID-19 soon after vaccination because your body hasn't had enough time to build full protection.

The vaccines don't protect me against COVID-19 variants. **Myth!**

Fact: New COVID-19 variants may be more contagious (able to be spread) than the older variants. Studies indicate that the vaccines used in the U.S. work well against the variants, reducing the risk of hospital stays and severe infections.

Breakthrough cases are still possible in people who are fully vaccinated. This means they can

spread the virus to others. Current variants seem to produce the same high amount of virus in both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated people. Vaccinated people appear to be contagious for a shorter period of time.

The CDC continues to monitor how well the vaccines work against current and new variants.

The vaccines cause infertility or miscarriages. **Myth!**

Fact: There is **no evidence** that the COVID-19 vaccine causes fertility problems (problems trying to get pregnant). The vaccines also don't affect fertility treatment success rates.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine before or during pregnancy **doesn't** increase the risk of miscarriage.

- More than 30,000 people in vaccine trials were either pregnant or trying to get pregnant. The miscarriage rate among

that group was about 13 percent.

- The miscarriage rate among all groups is 15 to 20 percent.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine reported there is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause a loss of fertility. They also recommend COVID-19 vaccines for people who are or may consider getting pregnant in the future.

It's not safe to breastfeed after getting the vaccine. **Myth!**

Fact: The mRNA vaccines produce antibodies in pregnant people. Antibodies have been found in breastmilk, which could help protect babies. More data is needed to determine what protection the antibodies may give babies.

Current research proves that antibodies from vaccines like Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) and influenza do protect babies.