

# COVID-19 advice for the public: Getting vaccinated

## Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Vaccines

## Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Vaccines safety

The world is in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. As WHO and partners work together on the response -- tracking the pandemic, advising on critical interventions, distributing vital medical supplies to those in need--- they are racing to develop and deploy safe and effective vaccines.

Vaccines save millions of lives each year. Vaccines work by training and preparing the body's natural defences – the immune system – to recognize and fight off the viruses and bacteria they target. After vaccination, if the body is later exposed to those disease-causing germs, the body is immediately ready to destroy them, preventing illness.

**There are several safe and effective vaccines that prevent people from getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19.** This is one part of managing COVID-19, in addition to the main preventive measures of staying at least 1 metre away from others, covering a cough or sneeze in your elbow, frequently cleaning your hands, wearing a mask and avoiding poorly ventilated rooms or opening a window.

As of 3 June 2021, WHO has evaluated that the following vaccines against COVID-19 have met the necessary criteria for safety and efficacy:

- **AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine**
- **Johnson and Johnson**
- **Moderna**

- **Pfizer/BionTech**
- **Sinopharm**
- **Sinovac**

Read our [Q&A](#) on the Emergency Use Listing process to find out more about how WHO assesses the quality, safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines.

Some national regulators have also assessed other COVID-19 vaccine products for use in their countries.

**Take whatever vaccine is made available to you first, even if you have already had COVID-19. It is important to be vaccinated as soon as possible once it's your turn and not wait.**

Approved COVID-19 vaccines provide a high degree of protection against getting seriously ill and dying from the disease, although no vaccine is 100% protective.

## **WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED**

**The COVID-19 vaccines are safe for most people 18 years and older**, including those with pre-existing conditions of any kind, including auto-immune disorders. These conditions include: hypertension, diabetes, asthma, pulmonary, liver and kidney disease, as well as chronic infections that are stable and controlled.

If supplies are limited in your area, discuss your situation with your care provider if you:

- **Have a compromised immune system**
- **Are pregnant (if you are already breastfeeding, you should continue after vaccination)**
- **Have a history of severe allergies, particularly to a vaccine (or any of the ingredients in the vaccine)**
- **Are severely frail**

**Children should not be vaccinated for the moment.**

Children and adolescents tend to have milder disease compared to adults, so unless they are part of a group at higher risk of severe COVID-19, it is less urgent to vaccinate them than older people, those with chronic health conditions and health workers.

**More evidence is needed on the use of the different COVID-19 vaccines in children to be able to make general recommendations on vaccinating children against COVID-19.**

WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) has concluded that the Pfizer/BionTech vaccine is suitable for use by people aged 12 years and above. Children aged between 12 and 15 who are at high risk may be offered this vaccine alongside other priority groups for vaccination. Vaccine trials for children are ongoing and WHO will update its recommendations

when the evidence or epidemiological situation warrants a change in policy.

It's important for children to continue to have the recommended childhood vaccines.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO AND EXPECT AFTER GETTING VACCINATED**

**Stay at the place where you get vaccinated for at least 15 minutes afterwards**, just in case you have an unusual reaction, so health workers can help you.

**Check when you should come in for a second dose – if needed.** Most of the vaccines available are two-dose vaccines. Check with your care provider whether you need to get a second dose and when you should get it. Second doses help boost the immune response and strengthen immunity.

**In most cases, minor side effects are normal.** Common side effects after vaccination, which indicate that a person's body is building protection to COVID-19 infection include:

- **Arm soreness**
- **Mild fever**
- **Tiredness**
- **Headaches**
- **Muscle or joint aches**

Contact your care provider if there is redness or tenderness (pain) where you got the shot that increases after 24 hours, or if side effects do not go away after a few days.

If you experience an immediate severe allergic reaction to a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, you should not receive additional doses of the vaccine. It's extremely rare for severe health reactions to be directly caused by vaccines.

Taking painkillers such as paracetamol before receiving the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent side effects is not recommended. This is because it is not known how painkillers may affect how well the vaccine works. However, you may take paracetamol or other painkillers if you do develop side effects such as pain, fever, headache or muscle aches after vaccination.

## **Even after you're vaccinated, keep taking precautions**

While a COVID-19 vaccine will prevent serious illness and death, we still don't know the extent to which it keeps you from being infected and passing the virus on to others. The more we allow the virus to spread, the more opportunity the virus has to change.

Continue to take actions to slow and eventually stop the spread of the virus:

- **Keep at least 1 metre from others**
- **Wear a mask, especially in crowded, closed and poorly ventilated settings.**
- **Clean your hands frequently**
- **Cover any cough or sneeze in your bent elbow**
- **When indoors with others, ensure good ventilation, such as by opening a window**

Doing it all protects us all.

## Vaccines explained series

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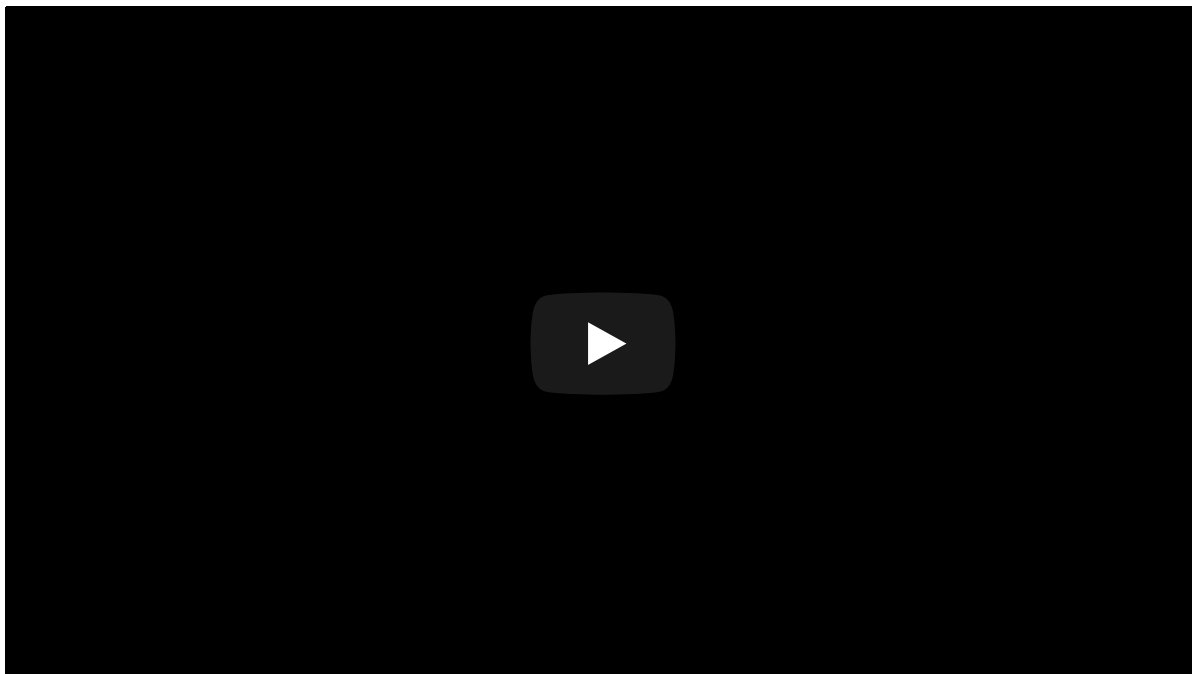


### Read our Vaccines Explained series

Learn more about vaccines from the earliest of research stages to their rollout in countries through our illustrated series of articles on vaccine development and distribution.

## Vaccines explained

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## Vaccine facts

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The infographic features a background with a gradient from pink to orange. On the right, there is an illustration of a clipboard with a checklist and a pen. The text is in white and pink. The WHO logo and 'COVID-19 vaccine fact series' are in the top right corner.

**The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are as safe as other vaccines**

The mRNA vaccines cannot change

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine fact series

Infographic  
**COVID-19 Vaccination fact 1**

The infographic features a background with a gradient from teal to light green. On the right, there is an illustration of a blue syringe. The text is in white. The WHO logo and 'COVID-19 vaccine fact series' are in the top right corner.

**All ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines are safe**

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine fact series




Ingredients help keep the vaccine blended

[Infographic](#)

## **COVID-19 Vaccination fact 2**

**Most people have mild or no side effects after taking a COVID-19 vaccine**


 Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series

As of May 2021, over 1.35 billion vaccine doses have been safely administered globally.

[Infographic](#)

## **COVID-19 Vaccination fact 3**

**Vaccination develops immunity from COVID-19 more effectively than getting infected and sick**


 Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series

Vaccination reduces the risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19.

[Infographic](#)

## **COVID-19 Vaccination fact 4**

**Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 helps protect you from getting sick**

 Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series

from getting sick

Vaccination reduces your risk of getting seriously ill and dying from COVID-19. The vaccine can create mild side effects such



Infographic

## COVID-19 Vaccination fact 5

Even after getting vaccinated, keep taking precautions to protect family and friends

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series

You could still get infected before your body has built up immunity. To protect yourself and others, continue



Infographic

## COVID-19 Vaccination fact 6

Vaccines offer strong protection against COVID-19 but people must take all the recommended doses

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series



Infographic

## COVID-19 Vaccination fact 7

# COVID-19 vaccines are halal

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series



COVID-19 vaccines do not

Infographic

## COVID-19 Vaccination fact 8

# COVID-19 vaccines only contain safe ingredients

Organization  
COVID-19 vaccine  
fact series



It is impossible to place a microchip inside your body when getting vaccinated.

Infographic

## COVID-19 Vaccination fact 9

## Infographics



It is important to be vaccinated as soon as possible and not wait. This way, we build





immunity in our communities faster and can get back to our normal lives

Infographic

## When it's your turn, take your vaccine



Think of the vaccine as a booster to protect you longer.



Infographic

## Get vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19

at the injection site



**In most cases, these are normal and last a short time.**

Contact your care provider if the tenderness or pain where you got the shot increases after 24 hours, or the side effects do not go away after a few days.



Infographic

## Typical side effects of the COVID-19

# Feature stories

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2 June 2021

## **The Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know**



19 May 2021

## **How to talk about vaccines**





10 May 2021

## **The Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know**



20 April 2021

## **The Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know**



29 March 2021



## The J&J COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know



11 February 2021

## The Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine: what you need to know



26 January 2021

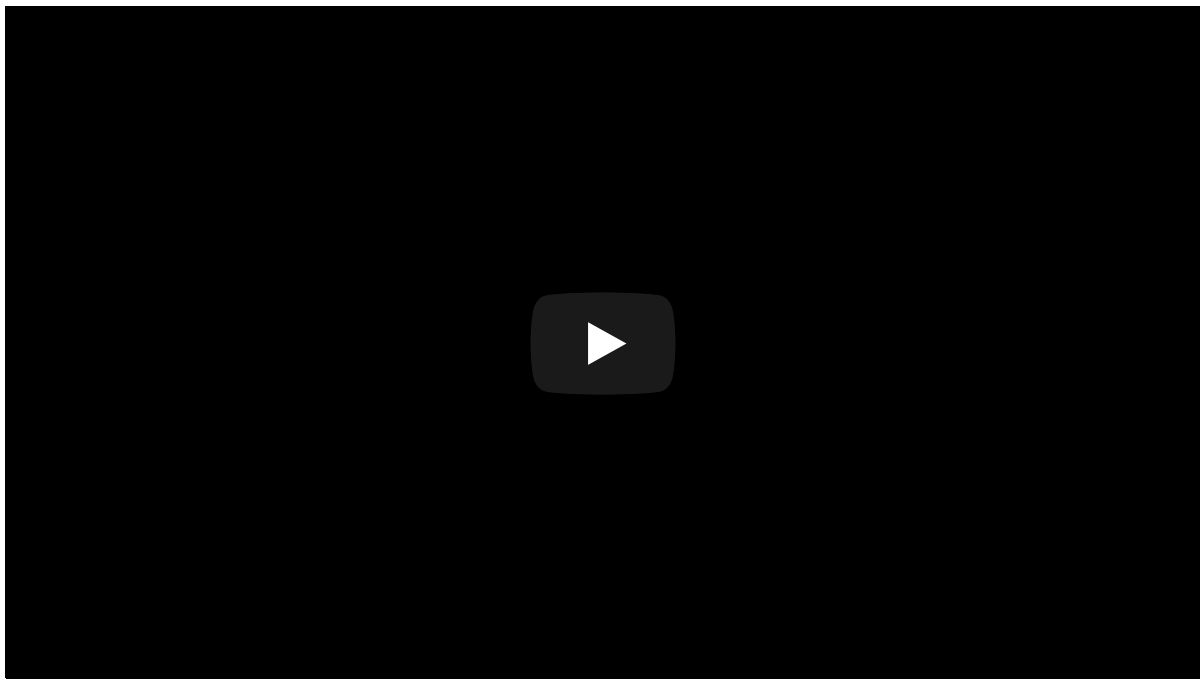
## The Moderna COVID-19 (mRNA-1273) vaccine: what you need to know

## Videos

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# I am vaccinated, what next?

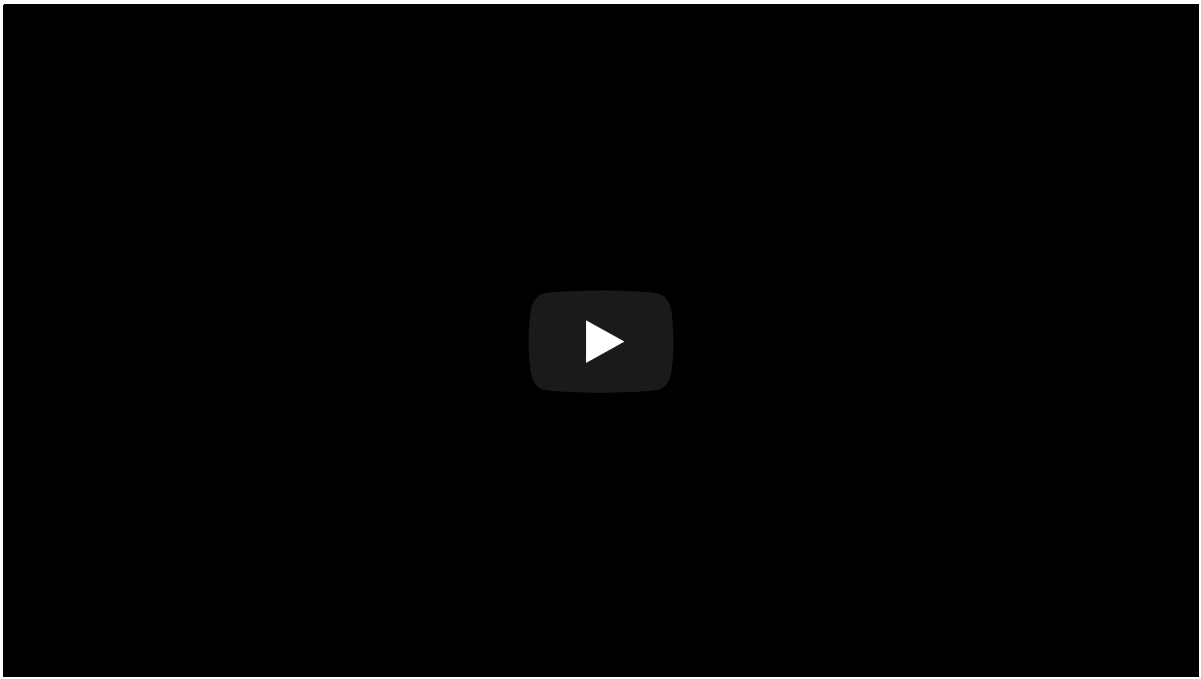
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## Vaccine dosage

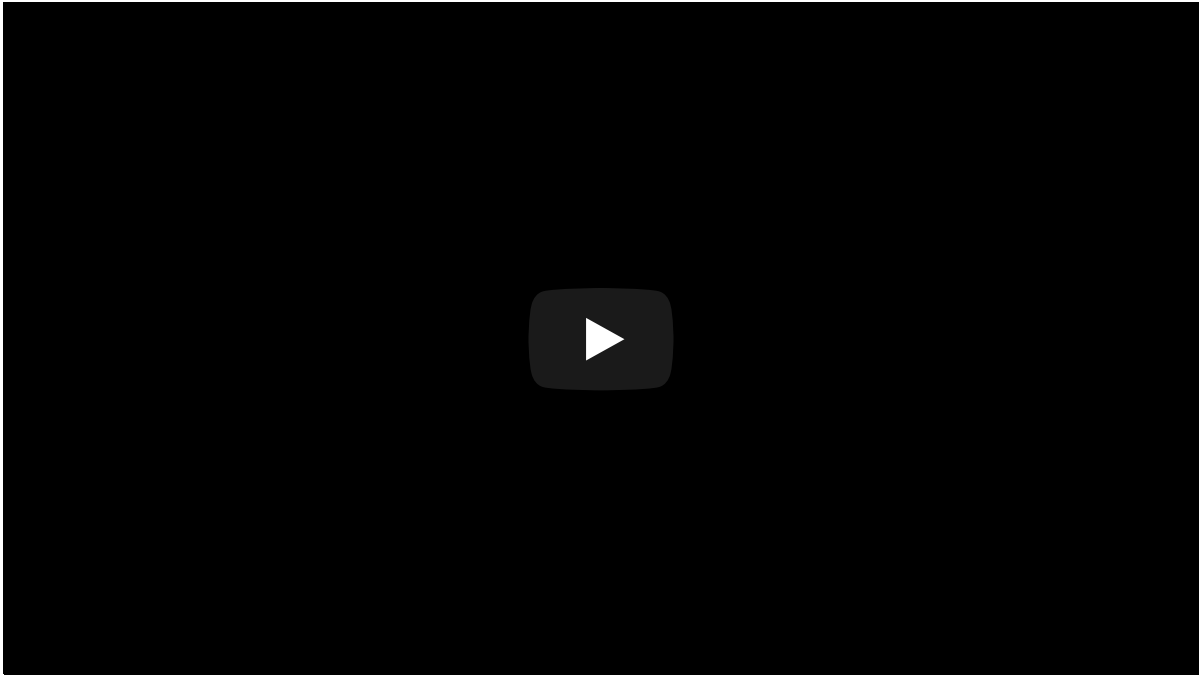
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**Vaccine myths vs science**

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# Vaccines, variants & herd immunity

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