

Should I get the COVID Vaccination?

10 Questions & Answers

1. Are the COVID vaccines actually effective?

The COVID vaccines are very good at preventing infection: about **95%** after two doses for Pfizer and Moderna [1,2], and **67%** for J&J [3]. With the Delta variant, efficacy decreased from **95%** to **90%** for Pfizer [4] and to 87% for Moderna [5]. Booster shots will increase those numbers. Efficacy is higher in children and adolescents [6,7]. All three of the vaccines are great at preventing hospitalizations and deaths from COVID - about **99%** [1,2,3].

2. Can the COVID vaccine give me allergic reactions?

About 1 in 100,000 people experience an allergic reaction to the vaccine [8] - these are mostly people who have a history of allergic reactions. There have been **no reported deaths from allergic reactions**. If you are allergic to polyethylene glycol (Miralax), you should not get the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. If you are allergic to polysorbate, you should not get the J&J vaccine.

3. Can the COVID vaccine give me myocarditis?

Out of 100,000 vaccinated people, there will be about three extra cases of myocarditis compared with 100,000 unvaccinated people [9]. In **all of the reported cases** of myocarditis related to COVID vaccine, the **symptoms resolved within 6 days** and there was no long-term cardiac damage [10]. Out of 100,000 people with a COVID infection, 11 more people got myocarditis compared with unvaccinated people [9]. **COVID infection is about four times more risky for myocarditis than the COVID vaccine.**

4. Did the drug companies include minorities when they tested the COVID vaccine?

Pfizer Study: Among 37,706 participants, 9% were Black, 28% were Hispanic or Latinx [1]

Moderna Study: Among 30,420 participants, 10% were Black, 20% were Hispanic or Latinx [2]

J&J Study: Among 43,783 participants, 19% were Black, 9% were indigenous South American [3]

5. Are the COVID vaccines safe for minorities?

The US Government has done a lot of terrible things in the past to minorities - this gives people good reasons to be distrustful of government and physicians. Minority groups have been affected more heavily by the COVID pandemic than white people. The vaccine is the **key to decreasing the devastating effects this pandemic has had on Brown and Black communities.**

6. How were the COVID vaccines developed so quickly without cutting corners?

The technology used to develop the mRNA vaccines has been **developing over the last 25 years**. We got lucky that this technology was available and that there was a spike protein on the COVID virus. The common cold virus does not have a similar spike protein which is why we were never able to vaccinate against the common cold.

7. Should I get the COVID vaccine if I am pregnant?

Yes. Both those planning pregnancy and those currently pregnant are recommended to get the COVID vaccine. Pregnant women are at higher risk of complications from COVID *infection*, including death [11].

8. Can the COVID vaccine affect my fertility?

There is **no evidence that any COVID vaccine affects fertility or sperm quality/count** [12]. There is, however, evidence that COVID *infection* can cause male reproductive disorder [13,14].

9. Can I get COVID from the vaccine?

No. These vaccines are made with mRNA - m stands for messenger. They send a message to your cells to produce a protein on the COVID virus and then your immune system can produce immunity against COVID. **The protein in the vaccine alone cannot give you COVID** without the rest of the virus. The mRNA does not affect your DNA. mRNA and DNA are different.

10. Is the J&J vaccine safe?

Yes. The J&J vaccine was paused for 10 days in April 2021 out of an abundance of caution. About **3 people per million** who received the J&J vaccine experienced blood clots [15,16]. Most reports were in adult women under age 50. The incidence of **blood clots associated with COVID infection** is much higher, at **39 per million** [17].

References

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