Questions and Answers about the COVID-19 Vaccines

Can Children get the Vaccine?
Children 6 months and older can be vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccines.

Is the Vaccine Safe?
COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. The COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated in tens of thousands of people in clinical trials. The vaccines met rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality.

Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccine. Over 63 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine were given from December 2020 - February 21, 2021 with the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history.

For more details, please refer to the linked articles on the safety and efficacy of the vaccines: (Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson).

Can I get COVID-19 from the Vaccine?
No, it is not possible to get infected with COVID-19 from these vaccines.

Because no vaccine is 100% effective, it is still possible to get COVID-19 even after you are vaccinated. But the research shows people who get the vaccine can fight off the virus more effectively if they get infected. Getting vaccinated reduces your chance of needing to be hospitalized or even death.

What are the Side Effects of the Vaccine?
Vaccines can have side effects, which are usually mild. At this time, the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine appear to be similar to those of other vaccines, including fever or other flu-like symptoms.

Some people experience soreness where they get the shot and others develop mild flu-like symptoms for a day or two. When your body has these kinds of responses, it's a sign that the vaccine is working. You are creating antibodies to the disease. Long term side effects are extremely rare from vaccines. There are much greater health risks from getting COVID-19 than getting vaccinated.

Are the Vaccines Safe for People of Color?
All the vaccine clinical trials included people of color in their research. For example, 10% of people in the Moderna clinical trial were Black and 20% were LatinX. In the Johnson & Johnson clinical trial almost 20% were Black and over 45% were Hispanic or LatinX. Data shows all vaccines are safe for these communities.

Since people of color are impacted at higher rates from COVID-19 than white people, we want to make sure everyone in these communities gets the COVID-19 vaccine.

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and help your community address inequity.

Were the Vaccines Developed Quickly?
The mRNA (Pfizer and Moderna) vaccines were developed more quickly than other vaccines, but there are reasons for this. First, technology had been in development for over a decade. Second, because of the pandemic, resources around the world were redirected to vaccine development, rather than focusing on other areas of research. We are lucky that the vaccine was able to be developed quickly, but no steps were skipped in the regular development and authorization processes.

How can I Trust Information I Get About the Vaccines?
Check your sources. The best place to get vaccine information is from government websites like the MA Department of Public Health.

You can also check credible publications that have scientific, peer reviewed research. The research results show that these vaccines are highly effective in protecting you from COVID-19 with at least one bivalent Covid 19 dose. There are a few exceptions (over the age of 65, immunocompromised, children 0 - 5 who did not complete their primary series).

Are the Shots Free?
The cost of a COVID-19 shot depends on your health insurance. We recommend you call your health insurance provider to confirm.

If I Already had COVID-19, do I Need to Get the Vaccine?
Yes. We recommend that people get vaccinated regardless of whether they already had COVID-19. This is because we do not yet know how long you are protected from a second infection after you recover from the first.

If I have Allergies, or an Underlying Medical Condition. Should I Get the Vaccine?
People with allergies or underlying medical conditions can get a COVID-19 vaccine as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Vaccination is an important consideration for adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions because they are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.