

COVID-19 Vaccine



Top Questions from Teens Answered



Q: If everyone was vaccinated, could COVID be eradicated?

A: It's possible that the disease would be eradicated. The other possibility, which may be more likely, is that COVID would still be here, but it wouldn't cause people to be so sick. So instead of causing people to be in the hospital, it would cause people to feel like they had a cold.

Q: Are they working on finding solutions to side effects of the vaccine?

A: The side effects from the vaccine are your body's way of telling you that the vaccine is doing its job. The vaccine gives you a small piece of the virus that can't make your body sick. But your body doesn't know that it can't make you sick. So it learns to practice fighting it. In order to practice, it does all the same things that it would if you were really sick (e.g. you might get a fever, achy, have a headache). But it does this in a really safe way because the vaccine can't give you COVID-19. Then, if you do get COVID-19, your body is ready to fight and it has already practiced. It is like going out and playing in the Superbowl without ever having trained. If you play in the Superbowl without ever having played football, you are going to get beat up and hurt. If you have been training all season and know how to play football, you are ready to go out there and beat the other team!

Q: What's the current status of the Delta variant?

A: Most of the virus that is circulating in the U.S. right now is the Delta variant.

Q: Does the COVID vaccine work right away?

A: It takes about 2 weeks after you get the vaccine for you to be protected. For the vaccines that require 2 doses (Pfizer/Moderna), this means that it is 2 weeks after the 2nd dose. Although there will be some effect 2 weeks after the 1st dose, but it won't be as effective as 2 weeks after the 2nd dose.

Q: Are alternatives to the vaccine currently being researched?

A: Vaccines are the best way to prevent disease. People are always studying ways to prevent viruses and infections, but so far, vaccines seem to be the best thing we have - for both COVID-19 and other diseases.

Q: Does the vaccine have negative long-term effects?

A: The vaccine has only been around for about a year. So far, we don't know of any long-term side effects. For some vaccines, there are very rare side effects that have been reported, but these are far less common than the side effects of COVID-19. These side effects generally occur soon after getting the vaccine.

Q: What percentage of deaths have been attributed to the vaccine?

A: Reports of death after COVID-19 vaccination are rare. More than 339 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines were administered in the United States from Dec. 14, 2020, through July 19, 2021. During this time, VAERS received 6,207 reports of death (0.0018%) among people who received a COVID-19 vaccine. FDA requires health care providers to report any death after COVID-19 vaccination to VAERS, even if it's unclear whether the vaccine was the cause. Reports of adverse events to VAERS following vaccination, including deaths, do not necessarily mean that a vaccine caused a health problem. *(It is important to remember anyone can report to VAERS. If you get the COVID vaccine and then get hit by a bus the next day, you can report that to VAERS as a death after the COVID-19 vaccine. But that doesn't mean they are related.)* A review of available clinical information, including death certificates, autopsy and medical records, has not established a causal link to COVID-19 vaccines. However, recent reports indicate a plausible causal relationship between the [J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine and TTS](#), a rare and serious adverse event—blood clots with low platelets—which has caused deaths.

Q: How does your body respond to the vaccine? Why do you feel symptoms after the second dose?

A: Your body responds to the vaccine by preparing and training the parts of your immune system that will fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Some people have symptoms after the first dose and some after the second dose while others have symptoms after both. The reason that some people have symptoms after the second dose is because your body is already trained and prepared to fight. So your body geared up your immune system with the first dose and made your immune system ready to fight. When you get the second dose, your body is there and totally prepared to fight. Picture an army ready to go into battle. But no one told the army that the enemy can't really hurt them. Your body is ready for battle with COVID-19.

Q: Will advances be made to the vaccine based on new variants?

A: Some companies are working on vaccines for variants but we will only know whether these are needed with time.

Q: Do certain species of animals (pets) need to be vaccinated?

A: Not right now, but vets, zookeepers, and other people who work with animals will keep watching this to see if this is needed in the future.