COVID-19 Vaccines
Things You Should Know

Safe and effective vaccines are now available to prevent COVID-19, but the supply is still limited. Read this information to learn more about the vaccines. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you have other questions or concerns.

Who can get the vaccine?
National and state guidelines limit who can get the vaccines at first, but as more vaccine becomes available, everyone should be able to get the vaccine. Many doctor’s offices, clinics, pharmacies, hospitals and health departments will have vaccines available.

- Persons age 16 and older can get the vaccine. There is no approved vaccine for children at this time.
- If you have had COVID-19, you should wait for 30 days after diagnosis before you get a vaccine.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, talk to your doctor about whether you should get the vaccine. Most often the risk of having COVID is greater than the risk of having the vaccine.
- If you have had the flu vaccine or any other vaccines, you should wait 14 days before getting the COVID vaccine.
- If you are not well, or have a fever of 100 degrees F or higher, you should wait until you are better to get the vaccine.

Getting a vaccine
You will be given an information sheet about the vaccine you are to receive and a vaccine card. The vaccine is given as a shot with a needle into the muscle of your upper arm. A second dose needs to be scheduled in 3 to 4 weeks after the first dose, based on the brand of vaccine you are given.

**Be sure to get the second dose of the same brand of vaccine** to give you the best protection. You will have some protection after the first dose, but the protection is greater after the second dose.

**Plan for you appointment to take about 1 hour.** You will need to wait for 15 to 30 minutes after getting the shot to check you for any reaction.

Your next vaccine appointment
Come back for your second dose of vaccine on:
___________________
at ___________.

Call the Vaccine Hot Line at 614-688-VAXX (8299) and select:

**Option 1** if you need to change or cancel your appointment, or you have questions about your appointment.

**Option 2** if you want to talk to a nurse about vaccine side effects or other health concerns.

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Side effects
The vaccines do not contain any live virus, so you cannot get COVID from the vaccine. You also are not able to pass COVID onto anyone else from getting the vaccine. Because the vaccines teach your body’s immune system how to recognize and fight the COVID virus, you may have some signs that the vaccine is working. These signs may include:
• Fever or chills
• Muscle and joint pain
• Headache
• Tiredness
• Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
These signs may occur the day after the vaccine and last for 1 to 2 days.
You may expect to have more side effects after your second dose of vaccine.

Common site reactions
The most common side effects at the site where the vaccine is given include:
• Pain
• Swelling or redness at the site
These signs will often improve over the first 2 days after the vaccine. Some people see redness and swelling come back a week later, but all redness and swelling should be gone by 2 weeks after the vaccine was given.
If you have site reactions for more than 2 weeks, or you have other questions about side effects, call the Vaccine Hot Line or check with your doctor.

Vaccine protection
Maximum vaccine protection will take 2 weeks after the second dose.
More study is needed to find out how long the vaccine is protective. Additional vaccines may be needed in the future.

Continue to take precautions
More study is being done to find out how well the vaccine prevents the spread of the virus in those who do not show any signs. Until many more people are vaccinated, you need to continue to take precautions.
Be sure to follow current guidelines:
• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol.
• Wear a facemask when around others. Be sure the mask covers your nose and mouth.
• Keep at least 6 to 10 feet away from others.
• Avoid crowds, especially indoors.

To learn more
Try these sites to learn more about COVID or the vaccine:
• go.osu.edu/coronavirus
• cdc.gov/coronavirus
• coronavirus.ohio.gov
You can also call the Ohio Department of Health Hotline with questions at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).