

# COVID-19: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE VACCINE

**The world's been waiting for a vaccine since COVID-19 first began. Vaccines are crucial to fighting deadly infectious diseases. When the vaccine becomes available to you, we strongly encourage that you receive it.**



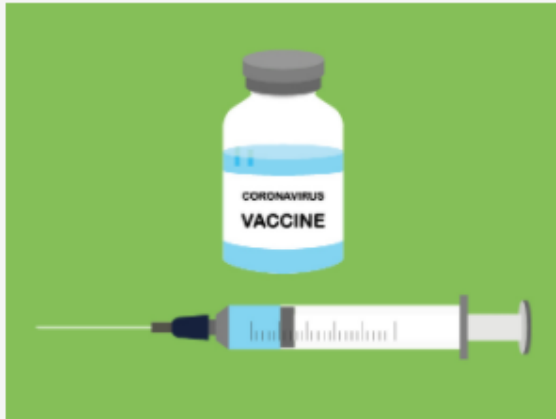
Initial supplies of the vaccine are expected to be limited and will be prioritized based on guidance from the CDC, which recommends vaccinating healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities first, as well as state and local authorities. The vaccine may not be widely available to the public until several months into 2021.

These vaccines give us hope, but the vaccine alone will not end the pandemic. We must all continue taking important precautions to help slow the spread of the virus. This includes wearing a mask, frequent hand washing and sanitizing, and physical and social distancing.

12/08/2020

Information sourced from Cleveland Clinic  
<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/landing/covid-19-vaccine>

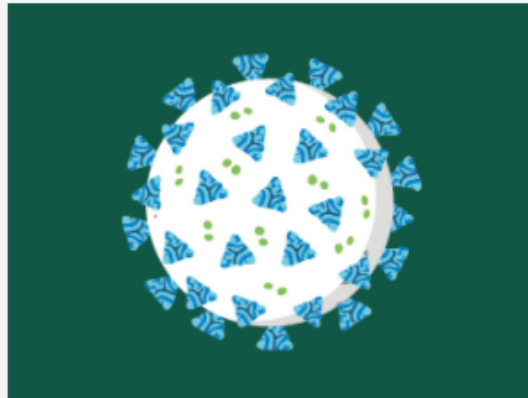
# How Are Vaccines Developed, and How Do They Work?



Vaccines save millions of lives each year from deadly diseases caused by viruses or bacteria. You encounter thousands of germs every day. While your immune system can fight most of them on its own, vaccines help it fight the disease-causing ones (pathogens) it can't handle.



Like medicines, vaccines go through a long process of research, development and approval before they're made available to the public.



Most vaccines won't prevent you from becoming infected with a certain pathogen. Rather, they allow your body to stop the infection before you get sick, or they prevent you from becoming seriously sick when you get infected.



Pathogens can spread quickly from person to person. When a large number of people in a community are vaccinated, the pathogen can't spread as easily. This is sometimes referred to as herd immunity.

# What Should I Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine?

After promising early results, pharmaceutical companies Pfizer and Moderna filed for emergency use authorization with the FDA. Both vaccines are mRNA-based and the first of their kind.

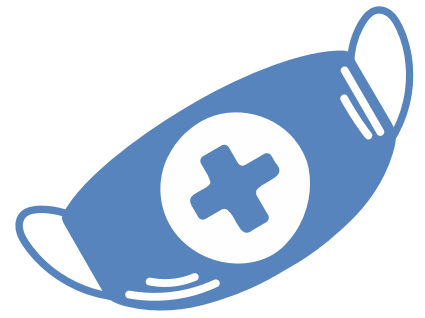
Normally, a vaccine works to train your body to recognize and respond to proteins that are produced by a bacteria or virus. However, mRNA vaccines trick your body into producing the protein itself with “messenger RNA” which causes your immune system to detect these proteins and start defending itself, without ever having to risk the serious consequences of getting sick with COVID-19. The FDA is set to review Pfizer’s vaccine application on December 10, while Moderna’s will be reviewed on December 17.

Following approval, both companies say they will have tens of millions of doses ready for national distribution by the end of 2020, with hundreds of millions of additional doses available in 2021 as production ramps up. Since there will not be enough supply initially to meet demand, health systems working in conjunction with state and local governments will distribute the COVID-19 vaccine in a phased approach, based on guidance from the CDC.



# Are Vaccines Safe?

## Yes.



Very rarely, vaccines can cause severe physical reactions, but usually they're mild — like some soreness where the vaccine was injected, a low-grade fever or achiness. This really means the immune system is sitting up and taking notice of the vaccine. In the U.S., the sponsor of a new vaccine must submit an application to the FDA before it can begin testing the vaccine in humans. Vaccines are tested in a three-phase clinical trial process to show that the product is safe and effective before it is approved. If a vaccine is approved by the FDA, regulators and drug companies continue to monitor its safety and effectiveness as more people take it



## What Are the Phases for COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution?

### Phase 1

Healthcare workers and first responders, state and local authorities, essential workers and residents of long-term care facilities

### Phase 3

Young adults and children (if the vaccine is determined safe for them)

### Phase 2

People with high-risk medical conditions, people older than 65

### Phase 4

All other U.S. residents

