



## Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?** Yes, the COVID-19 vaccines are safe. Currently the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has approved both the [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) and [Moderna](#) vaccines.  
While the federal program “Operation Warp Speed” implies accelerated development, the approval process for these vaccines followed all necessary safety steps. The standard research process was followed, but expedited due to increased federal funding of the clinical trials. Additionally, it was easy to meet the required sample sizes since COVID-19 was so widespread throughout the country.
- 2. What are the different types of vaccines currently available?** Both [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) and [Moderna](#) vaccines use mRNA technology, which is different from typical vaccines in that they don't inject particles of live or altered virus. Instead, these vaccines send a code into your cells so your immune system learns how to make a spike protein that looks like the protein on the outside of coronavirus-19. Your immune system is not making the actual virus. Your immune system then learns how to make antibodies against the spike protein. Both vaccines require two doses for maximum protection; Pfizer recommends the second dose 21 days after the first; Moderna recommends the second dose 28 days after the first. You must get your second dose from the same manufacturer as the first.
- 3. What are the side effects?** Common side effects include redness, soreness and swelling at the injection site, as well as feeling tired, developing lymph node swelling (most commonly in your armpit), a headache or fever and chills, while less common symptoms include nausea and vomiting. Side effects are more common after the second dose, with over 75% of vaccinated people developing at least one side effect. Nearly all symptoms lasted less than three days (72 hours) and most improved with Tylenol or ibuprofen. This response is your immune system activating, not an indication that you are infected with the virus. Note: the vaccine does not cause symptoms typical of coronavirus such as runny nose or cough; if you experience these symptoms, you should isolate and seek care.
- 4. Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?** No, you cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine nor will your COVID-19 screening tests become positive due to receiving the vaccine. Additionally you are not contagious once you've received the vaccine. However, there is still not enough evidence on whether the vaccines prevent asymptomatic infection so it is important that those who have been vaccinated continue social distancing and wearing a mask until the general population is mostly vaccinated.
- 5. Will the vaccine alter my DNA?** No, the “messenger” part of the mRNA vaccine activates your cells to make its own spike proteins to fight the virus, then degrades within hours, never affecting your body's DNA.

6. **Does the vaccine contain a microchip?** No, the vaccine does not contain a microchip. The independent Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB), composed of clinicians and scientists who are not part of or paid by the pharmaceutical companies, reviewed the vaccine and deemed it safe and effective.
7. **When will I be immune to COVID-19?** Although there are subtle differences between the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, you will receive partial immunity after the first dose, but will not be fully protected until one to two weeks after the second dose. It is still being determined how long you will have protection once you receive both doses.
8. **Does the vaccine keep me from getting or giving COVID-19?** At this point, we do not know if you can still transmit the virus after vaccination. What we do know is those vaccinated will have fewer symptomatic COVID-19 infections AND the small percentage who may still get COVID-19 will be much less likely to experience serious illness or death.
9. **If I am vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask and social distance?** Yes, continuing to heed public health orders related to masking and social distancing is imperative to further containing COVID-19 and limiting community transmission.
10. **If I've had COVID-19 should I get the vaccine?** Yes, even if you have had COVID-19, we recommend the vaccination as there have been cases of patients being infected with COVID-19 more than once and the vaccines appear to provide improved protection for those who have previously been infected. It is recommended you are not contagious with the virus and are cleared by healthcare provider prior to receiving the vaccine.
11. **If I am pregnant/ breastfeeding should I receive the vaccine?** The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, as well as Barton's OB/GYN physician group, recommends the current mRNA vaccines for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Pregnant or breastfeeding women should discuss their options with their healthcare provider if they have further questions.
12. **When can I be vaccinated?** Barton works closely with local county public health departments to help communicate, plan and distribute vaccines as needed. If you are eligible to receive the vaccination based on your employment, your employer will register with the county and then communicate the process with you. Check with your county to learn which tier is eligible for vaccination:
  1. El Dorado County:  
<https://www.edcgov.us/Government/hhsa/Pages/EDCCOVID-19-vaccine.aspx>
  2. Quad-County:  
<https://getthehealthycarsoncity.org/novel-coronavirus-2019/covid-19-vaccine/>
13. **How much does the vaccine cost?** The COVID-19 vaccine is paid for by the U.S. Government and provided at no charge, however vaccine administrators may charge a fee for giving the shot(s).

## Pre-Vaccination Questions

1. **What about my history of anaphylaxis?** Additional information with continued vaccination confirms that the incidence of anaphylaxis is similar to that after all vaccinations. Any allergic reactions related to the vaccine should occur within four hours of receiving the vaccine, but most commonly within 30 minutes.

2. **What if I get symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or catch COVID-19 around the time I am supposed to get my vaccination?** Please do not come in for your vaccine if you are suspected of having COVID-19, or are supposed to be isolating or under quarantine.
3. **What if I have already had COVID-19 and/ or get COVID-19 between my first and second dose? What if my antibody test is positive?**
  - Complete your isolation period and recover from the illness prior to considering a vaccination dose. Please speak with a healthcare provider to get clearance to receive your vaccination if you had COVID-19 within the last two weeks.
  - It is recommended that you still be vaccinated because current information indicates you lose immunity about 60-90 days after your coronavirus infection. It is believed that the vaccine will protect you significantly longer than 90 days.
  - Your positive antibody status should not impact the vaccine efficacy. Your vaccine-related symptoms may be more severe than someone who has not had COVID-19.
  - If you received monoclonal antibody treatment, you should not receive the vaccine for 90 days.
4. **I just got another vaccine for another reason- when can I get my COVID-19 vaccine?** You should wait two weeks between any vaccines and your coronavirus vaccine.
5. **What if I have a procedure (radiology, joint injection or surgery) planned around the time of my vaccination?** Because side effects from the vaccine are common, and procedures occasionally have complications, we recommend that you separate your procedures from your vaccine by about two weeks so that vaccine reactions and procedure complications are not confused.

## Questions About The Second Dose

1. **What if I miss my second dose?** The CDC recommends that you get your second dose within four days after your “target” date of 21 or 28 days. However, if you cannot make this window, you are still eligible to get your second dose at its earliest availability.
2. **I had a reaction to the first dose vaccine. Should I get my second dose?** In general, you can expect to get similar symptoms after your second dose of vaccine, but often they are more severe. If you experienced any allergic reaction such as facial swelling, difficulty breathing, hypotension, numbness or tingling or itching, you should not proceed with the second dose until discussing the risks with your care provider.

## Post-Vaccine Questions

1. **If I get COVID-19, will I be a monoclonal antibody candidate if I am vaccinated?** Your vaccination should not impact your candidacy for monoclonal antibody; however, hopefully your own immune system is making antibodies and fighting the infection itself. More science and time is needed to know if the monoclonal antibody infusions are necessary/ impactful for those who have been vaccinated.
2. **Will this vaccine protect me from the new variants of coronavirus emerging in the UK or South Africa?** It appears that the variant spike proteins are similar enough that the

vaccine will still offer protection against the variant strains. At some point, the vaccine could mutate enough that we will need a different vaccine, but that isn't necessary at this point.

For additional information, visit: [www.bartonhealth.org/coronavirus](http://www.bartonhealth.org/coronavirus)