

# Johnson & Johnson vaccine FAQs

## ► Is the vaccine safe?

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) found the **Johnson & Johnson vaccine** to be safe and effective, and they authorized it for emergency use on Feb. 27, 2021. According to Johnson & Johnson, it offers complete protection against hospitalization and death as a result of the virus.

While Johnson & Johnson is the name most know this new vaccine by, it was actually co-developed by Johnson & Johnson and Janssen. Therefore, patients who receive this vaccine will see Janssen in their medical record, not Johnson & Johnson.

## ► Is the one-dose vaccine as effective as the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines?

The one-dose vaccine is effective and can protect people from COVID-19. All three vaccines are 100 percent effective in preventing COVID-19-related hospitalization and death once fully vaccinated. All three vaccines are also extremely effective in preventing symptomatic or severe cases of the virus.

## ► Why do patients receive one shot instead of two?

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine works differently in the body than the two-dose vaccines, which is why people receive just one dose. This method has been used for many years to develop successful vaccines for use in people.

The one-dose vaccine is a viral vectored vaccine, which uses a harmless type of virus to help the body make a specific protein to trigger an immune response to COVID-19. The two-dose vaccines use messenger RNA, or mRNA, that teach the body how to make a protein to trigger an immune response to COVID-19.

## ► Can the vaccine give me COVID-19 when administered?

No. Viral vectored vaccines cannot cause COVID-19.

▶ **What are the short-term, expected effects of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?**

Similar to the two-dose vaccines, people may experience cold-like symptoms, such as headache, body aches, arm pain and tiredness. Fewer than 10 percent of participants experienced a fever and no one in the Johnson & Johnson one-dose study reported a severe allergic reaction.

▶ **What are the long-term side-effects of the vaccine?**

It is unknown at this time if there are any long-term effects of the current vaccines. The FDA and vaccine manufacturers are continuing to monitor the vaccines' long-term safety; this is a normal process for all new medications.

▶ **Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others after I have been vaccinated?**

Yes. It is still important for everyone to continue to cover their mouth and nose with a mask, wash their hands often, and stay at least six feet away from others.

▶ **How long after I receive the vaccine should I consider myself immune?**

Protection from the vaccine begins about two weeks after receiving the shot. Like other vaccines, it takes time for the body to develop protection.

▶ **If I have been vaccinated and no known exposure, can I safely be around high-risk, nonvaccinated people?**

Until we have further information, we do not recommend being around high-risk, nonvaccinated individuals.

▶ **Can children receive the vaccines?**

Similar to the Moderna vaccine, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is safe for people age 18 and older. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is authorized for use in people aged 16 years or older.

▶ **Is it safe for pregnant women to get the vaccines?**

The vaccines were not studied in pregnant women; however, the **American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for**

**Maternal-Fetal Medicine** recommend that COVID-19 vaccines should not be withheld from pregnant individuals. If you are pregnant, we recommend consulting with your obstetrician or primary care physician for any specific questions or concerns that you may have.

▶ **How do the vaccines affect those who have an autoimmune disease?**

People with autoimmune conditions may receive any authorized COVID-19 vaccine. It is possible that they may have a diminished immune response, but the consensus of numerous professional societies is that people with autoimmune disease are at higher risk for severe COVID, and that they stand to benefit greatly from vaccination.

▶ **Can I receive the vaccine if I've had COVID-19?**

Yes, you can still receive the vaccine if you have had COVID-19. At minimum, you should wait until you have recovered from being sick and you are out of isolation.

▶ **If you have had COVID-19, do you still need the vaccine?**

Yes. Having COVID-19 is likely to give you some degree of natural immunity against reinfection, but we cannot be sure how robust that protection will be because the immune response is variable in different people, and so is the degree to which they were infected in the first place. Vaccination is calibrated to a dose that will provoke an effective immune response in all recipients, and so will more consistently protect us for a longer period of time.

▶ **Will we need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine annually like the flu vaccine?**

This will be influenced by many factors, and it is too early to know for sure.

▶ **How will those administering the vaccine know if individuals have chronic conditions?**

We are asking Individuals to self-identify if they have chronic conditions.

We want to make sure everyone at a higher risk of getting COVID-19 can access the vaccine, including those who do not have access to a healthcare provider and do not have documented chronic conditions.

► **What are the benefits of one dose?**

A single-dose vaccine may be desirable for people who want to complete their immunization schedule quickly, do not want to return for a second dose or have difficulty returning for a second dose. A single-dose vaccine is beneficial for areas where it is difficult to schedule appointments online or store the vaccines.

The vaccine is also easier to store than other vaccines. It can be stored at normal refrigerator temperatures for up to three months, meaning we can more easily get it into the community to vaccinate more people against COVID-19.

► **Does the vaccine protect against new strains or variants of COVID-19?**

Johnson & Johnson is continuing to study effectiveness against new variants. So far, the one-dose vaccine has been more than 80 percent effective at preventing severe disease across United States, Brazil and South Africa populations.

We know the vaccines available now are safe and effective. The most important thing right now is to get as many people as possible vaccinated using the vaccines available so we can better protect people in our communities.

► **Who was included in the clinical trials for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?**

The clinical trial pool for Johnson & Johnson was diverse. In the United States, 74 percent were White/Caucasian; 15 percent were Hispanic/Latinx; 13 percent were Black/African American; 6 percent were Asian and 1 percent were Native American.

Forty-one percent of participants in the study had health conditions associated with an increased risk for developing severe COVID-19, including obesity (28.5 percent), type 2 diabetes (7.3 percent),

hypertension (10.3 percent) and HIV (2.8 percent). Other immunocompromised participants were also in the study.

▶ **What determines which COVID-19 vaccine an individual will receive?**

At this time, we receive our vaccine allocations from the state of Virginia. Vaccine availability will determine which vaccine a person will receive.

▶ **Can people choose which vaccine they want to get?**

Given the limited amount of vaccine supply available, people are not able to choose the type of vaccine they will receive. All vaccines currently available are safe and protect people against COVID-19.

Regardless of which vaccine you receive, you will be better protected than if you did not receive a vaccine. The most important thing right now is to get as many people vaccinated using the vaccines available. Herd immunity will better protect people in our communities.