

COVID-19 VACCINES: MEMBER EDUCATION

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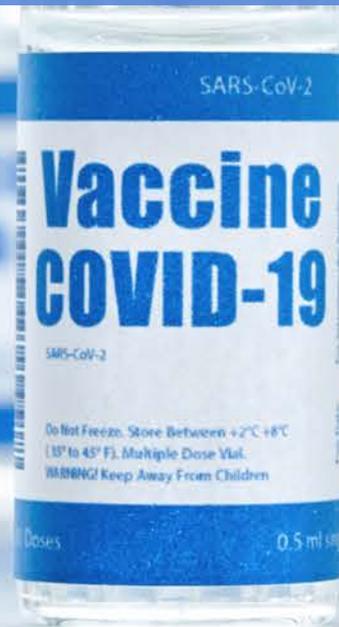
Here's why the COVID-19 vaccines were able to be developed and approved swiftly

- Traditional vaccines typically use a weakened version of the pathogen or a protein piece of it, and because these are grown in eggs or cells, developing traditional vaccines takes an average of 10 to 14 years.
- Pfizer and Moderna were able to develop their messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines faster because they did not have to produce protein or make a weakened form of the virus for the vaccine.
- The mRNA vaccines use only the genetic material that makes the spike protein on the surface of the coronavirus, which infects human cells.
- The simplified design and manufacture of the vaccines cut years from the process.



COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers are being held to the highest safety standards

- 1) A vaccine issued under an Emergency Use Authorization must undergo the same rigorous review for safety and efficacy as all other vaccines.
- 2) The FDA must determine whether the known and potential benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine outweigh its potential risks.
- 3) Manufacturers must present safety data gathered from multiple-phased trials – Pfizer and Moderna trials had more than 73,000 participants.
- 4) More than 3,000 vaccine recipients were followed for at least one month after they completed the course of the vaccine to monitor for side effects.
- 5) Vaccine manufacturers must submit proof that their vaccine is safe and effective, which is reviewed by an independent panel of scientists, physicians and the FDA before the vaccine can be approved for distribution.





Affected populations, especially people of color, were included in the COVID-19 vaccine trials

- While vaccines work the same in people of different races or ethnicities, it is important to make sure they are tested in diverse population groups before their release.
- In Pfizer's clinical U.S. trial, 13.1 percent of participants were Hispanic or Latinx, 10.1 percent were Black and 5.5 percent were Asian-American. About 45 percent of participants were between 56 and 85 years of age.
- In Moderna's U.S. trial, 20 percent of participants identified as Hispanic or Latinx and 10 percent identified as Black or African American. About 23.3 percent of participants were over the age of 65. Of the participants who were under the age of 65, 16.7 percent had high-risk chronic diseases, such as diabetes, severe obesity and cardiac disease.

HOW THE VACCINES WORK



- The Pfizer vaccine requires two shots given 21 days apart.
- The Moderna vaccine requires two shots given 28 days apart.
- Because neither vaccine contains active or inactive virus, they cannot give you COVID-19.
- The mRNA “tells” your body to produce antibodies to the virus, which typically takes a few weeks after vaccination.
- It is important to get the second shot because it boosts your immunity.
- The vaccine protects you against having severe disease and symptoms.
- If you come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 after you have been vaccinated, you would be protected – but you may be a silent spreader.

REPORTED SIDE EFFECTS

A close-up photograph of a person's arm being treated by a healthcare professional. The professional is wearing blue nitrile gloves and is applying a white adhesive bandage to the person's skin. The person's arm is resting on a light-colored surface, possibly a table or bed. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the person's arm and the professional's hands. The overall lighting is soft and clinical.

- Injection site pain, redness and swelling
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Joint pain
- Fever
- Nausea
- Feeling unwell
- Swollen lymph nodes

SPECIAL CATEGORIES



People with allergies:

The FDA feels the vaccines should be safe for most people with allergies. However, those who have had a previous severe allergic reaction to vaccines or ingredients should avoid getting the vaccine and consult their doctor.



People with underlying health conditions:

30,000 people in the vaccine trials had chronic conditions, so people with cancer or a condition such as diabetes, hypertension or obesity may take the vaccine but should first be sure to consult with their doctor.



People age 65 and up:

The vaccines have been shown to provide similar protection for older and younger people, and because older people's immune responses are not as strong, the threat posed by COVID-19 complications is a bigger risk.



Pregnant women:

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says that the Pfizer vaccine is safe for pregnant or lactating women.



Children:

The Pfizer vaccine is recommended for people age 16 and up. There is currently no approved vaccine for children under 16.

WHAT IS STILL UNKNOWN

- How long does vaccine protection last?
- Will people need to get the vaccine every year?
- Will there be any long-term effects associated with the vaccine?
- When will there be a vaccine for children?

QUESTIONS?



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