



FAQ – COVID-19 Vaccines

As of 10/28/2021

COVID-19 Booster Shots

Booster shots are now available for eligible community members who received Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

A Pfizer or Moderna booster shot is recommended if you:

- Got your second dose at least 6 months ago, and
- Are 65 or older, or
- Are 18 or older and a long-term care resident, or
- Are 18 or older and have an [underlying medical conditions](#), or
- Are 18 or older and at increased risk due to [social inequity](#) (including that of communities of color), or
- Are 18 or older and work or live in a high-risk setting (like a shelter)
 - The CDC defines [high-risk jobs](#) as:
 - First responders (healthcare workers, firefighters, police, congregate care staff)
 - Education staff (teachers, support staff, daycare workers)
 - Food and agriculture workers
 - Manufacturing workers
 - Corrections workers
 - U.S. Postal Service workers
 - Public transit workers
 - Grocery store workers

A Johnson & Johnson booster shot is recommended if you:

- Got your first dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at least two months ago, and
- Are 18 or older

When can I get a COVID-19 vaccine booster if I am NOT in one of the recommended groups?

Additional populations may be recommended to receive a booster shot as more data become available. The COVID-19 vaccines approved and authorized in the United States continue to be effective at reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death. Experts are looking at all available data to understand how well the vaccines are working for different populations. This includes looking at how new variants, like Delta, affect vaccine effectiveness.

Is a booster dose the same amount of vaccine as doses in the original vaccine series?

The Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson booster doses will be the same dosage as the original vaccine received in the series, while the Moderna booster dose will be half the dosage compared to the original vaccine series.



Can you mix and match the vaccines?

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers it safe to receive a booster of either the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

For example, Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine recipients 18 years and older may receive a single booster of the J&J or Pfizer, or a booster dose of Moderna (half dose) at least two months after receiving their J&J primary vaccination.

In another example, Moderna and Pfizer vaccine recipients falling into one of the authorized categories for boosters may receive a booster dose of Moderna (half dose), Pfizer, or J&J at least six months after completing their primary vaccination.

If we need a booster shot, does that mean that the vaccines aren't working?

No. COVID-19 vaccines are working well to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death, even against the widely circulating Delta variant. However, public health experts are starting to see reduced protection, especially among certain populations, against mild and moderate disease.

Where can I get a COVID-19 vaccine booster?

Please check the Solano Public Health's [COVID-19 Vaccine Information page](#) for more information about vaccination locations within the county. You may also check with your healthcare provider to provide you with additional information about vaccine availability. Qualifying individuals can also schedule an appointment at their nearest pharmacy that administers booster doses. These include Walmart pharmacy, Safeway pharmacy, CVS, Rite Aid, and Walgreens.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to be vaccinated?

Anyone 12 and over who live, attend school or work in Solano County can get vaccinated.

Are vaccines free?

Yes, vaccines are provided for free to anyone living in the United States, regardless of immigration or health insurance status.

How will I know when and where to go?

Please check the Solano Public Health's [COVID-19 Vaccine Information page](#) for more information about vaccination locations within the county. You may also check with your healthcare provider to provide you with additional information about vaccine availability. More clinics can also be found using the state's MyTurn notification and vaccine clinic platform at www.myturn.ca.gov, where you can find more information about vaccine clinics surrounding Solano County.



How do I know when to come back for the second dose of vaccine?

If you need help scheduling your vaccine appointment for your second shot, contact the location that set up your appointment for assistance. You will be given a CDC vaccine card with additional information including the follow up vaccination. If you received your vaccine through the mass vaccination clinic or popup vaccine clinics hosted by Solano County, please see the list of previous vaccine clinics on the www.solanocounty.com/covidvaccine page for more information.

Immunocompromised Additional Dose

Additional doses of Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are now available for those with moderately to severely compromised immune systems.

This includes people who:

- Get **active cancer treatment** for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Got an **organ transplant** and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Got a **stem cell transplant** within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Have **moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency** (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Have **advanced or untreated HIV infection**
- Get **active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids** or other drugs that suppress immune response

Talk to your doctor to see if getting an additional dose is right for you.

Safety and Effectiveness

Why should I get vaccinated?

Vaccination is an important tool to help stop the pandemic. It protects you and others by reducing infection and the spread of COVID-19. Together, the vaccine and other public health measures (like wearing a face covering and social distancing) will offer the best protection from COVID-19, reducing further spread so businesses and schools can fully reopen, and we can return to a more normal way of life.

Are the vaccines safe and effective?

Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is safe. It has undergone tens of thousands of clinical trials and has met the FDA's rigorous standards for safety needed to support emergency use. Vaccines have a long history of safety and effectiveness. While infrastructure to manufacture COVID-19 vaccines is being scaled up as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has an independent group of experts that reviews all the safety data as it comes in and provides regular safety updates. The State of California also conducts its own review of the vaccines' clinical data to ensure they're safe to use. The CDC, Food and Drug Administration and healthcare providers will continue safety monitoring as more people are vaccinated to learn about any additional vaccine side effects.



How does the vaccine work?

The Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines are mRNA vaccines, and they do not contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. Therefore, they cannot give someone COVID-19. The vaccines do not contain live viruses that could cause infection, are rapidly broken down by the human body after injection and do not interact with or affect with a person's DNA. The vaccines use messenger RNA to teach the body's own cells to produce antibodies to protect itself from COVID-19. Both vaccines require two doses over a three- to four-week period.

The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is a viral vector vaccine, meaning it uses a modified version of a different virus to deliver important instructions to our cells.

What are the side effects?

Common side effects include pain and swelling on the injection site and fever, chills, tiredness, and headache throughout the rest of the body. These side effects are normal signs that the body is building protections. These side effects may affect the ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Both Pfizer and Moderna have created fact sheets that include common side effects and other information you should know:

[Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)

[Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)

[Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)

[Get the Facts on Vaccines Fact Sheet](#)

If I am pregnant, can I still receive the vaccine?

If you are pregnant, you may choose to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Based on how the vaccines work in the body, experts believe they are unlikely to pose a specific risk for people who are pregnant. You may want to have a conversation with your healthcare provider to help you decide whether to get vaccinated with a vaccine that has been authorized for use under Emergency Use Authorization. However, there are currently limited data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant people.

What happens if I miss or am late for the second dose of the series?

If you miss your second dose appointment, you should reschedule as soon as possible. The CDC recommends following recommended guidelines, but if this is not feasible, the second dose of either Pfizer or Moderna vaccine can be administered up to six weeks after the first one. Both doses are needed for full protection. A single dose conveys a lower degree of protection from the virus than two doses. There is no reason to schedule a third dose if the second is received late.

Can I take my dose early if I have a scheduling conflict?

The CDC indicates that it is safe to administer vaccines up to four days early. Anything beyond that should be considered an error and reported (to your healthcare provider or directly to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System).



What if I get infected with COVID-19 after the first dose of vaccine but before the second one? Will I need to wait and retake the first dose or just get the second?

There is no need to retake the first dose. Self-isolate for 10 days from symptom onset or from the testing date if you are asymptomatic. Schedule your second dose appointment after the self-isolation period is complete.

Fully Vaccinated Individuals

What can fully vaccinated individuals do after getting vaccinated?

People are considered fully vaccinated once it has been two weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series, or 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine.

Fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic
- Resume domestic travel and refrain from testing before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel (unless required by the destination)
- Refrain from testing before leaving the U.S. for international travel (unless required by the destination)

How long is the protection from the COVID-19 vaccine?

We are still unsure of the length of the protection for the vaccines. Experts are working to learn more about both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity to the COVID-19 virus.