

COVID-19 VACCINE FAQs

Being vaccinated is **one of many** steps you can take to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Even after you get the vaccine, you should continue to wash your hands often, stay home when sick, and wear a mask as indicated.

What are the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

- All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccine also prevents you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19 from the original or variant strains.
- Being vaccinated also protects people around you.

How does COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

- COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

How old do I need to be to get the vaccine?

- Everyone 12 years of age and older is now eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccination.
- Teens who are 12-17 years old should only sign up for vaccination clinics that are providing the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

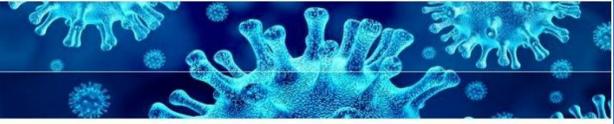
How can I sign up or sign my child up for a COVID-19 vaccine?

- There are several ways you can find a vaccination provider near you:
- If you live or work in Baltimore County, go to [The Baltimore County COVID-19 vaccine website](#).
- If you do not live or work in Baltimore County, check your home county health department website.



COVID-19 Information

Office of Health Services 443-809-6368



- Contact your community hospital or pharmacy provider. Find an updated list of providers and pre-register for an appointment near you at [COVID-19 Vaccinations in Maryland](#).

If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to be vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Even if you already had COVID-19, the vaccine is recommended because severe health risks are associated with COVID-19 and re-infection with COVID-19 is possible.
- At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The protection someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person.

As an employee or student of BCPS, is it mandatory that I receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?

- No, it is your choice if you want to receive the vaccine.

Does it matter which COVID-19 vaccine I get, and do I have a choice about which vaccine I receive?

- All available vaccines will help provide you protection against the COVID-19 virus.
- All of the vaccines have similar side effects.

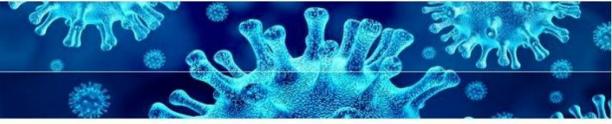
How many shots of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?

- Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine requires only one dose.
- The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines require two shots, spaced 3 to 4 weeks apart. The first shot gets your body ready. The second shot is given at least three weeks later to make sure you have full protection. If you are told you need two shots, it is important to get both. Be sure to follow instructions given to schedule your second shot.



COVID-19 Information

Office of Health Services 443-809-6368



- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. You should allow 2 weeks after your final COVID-19 vaccine for maximum protection.

How do I know the vaccine is safe?

- The U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure all vaccines are as safe as possible.
- All of the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years.
- A system in place across the entire country allows the CDC to watch for safety issues and make sure the vaccines stay safe.
- If you have specific concerns about COVID-19 vaccine, reach out to your regular medical provider to discuss.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

- No, none of the COVID-19 vaccines contain the live virus that causes COVID-19.

What should I expect after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

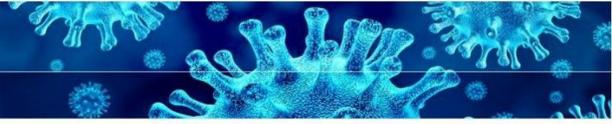
- Pain and swelling at the injection site are common side effects.
- You may also experience fever, chills, tiredness, muscle and joint aches, and headache. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will not last longer than a day or two. Having these types of side effects does NOT mean that you have COVID-19.
- It is advised that you use your arm after receiving the vaccine and drink plenty of fluids.
- You will be asked to sit for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccination to be monitored for the rare possibility of an allergic reaction.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?



COVID-19 Information

Office of Health Services 443-809-6368



- None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently being administered cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.
- If your body develops an immune response – the goal of vaccination – there is a possibility that you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate that you may have some level of protection against the virus.

Can I stop wearing a mask after I have been vaccinated?

- Fully vaccinated people can resume many activities they enjoyed before the pandemic, with the choice of wearing a mask.
- It is recommended that fully vaccinated people wear masks when in indoor public spaces if:
 - community transmission is substantial or high.
 - they are immunocompromised.
 - a household member is immunocompromised or unvaccinated.
- Depending on location, activity, regional law, workplace rules, or business guidance, masks may be required for all.
- Physical distancing and masks are additional layers of protection to help prevent getting infected with and spreading COVID-19.

Can I still get COVID-19 after I have been vaccinated?

- While the vaccines are very effective, it is still possible to become infected with COVID-19 after being vaccinated. Vaccinated people typically have mild or no symptoms if infected with COVID-19.
- If you are vaccinated and develop symptoms of COVID-19, you should stay home and be evaluated by a health care provider to see if testing is recommended.

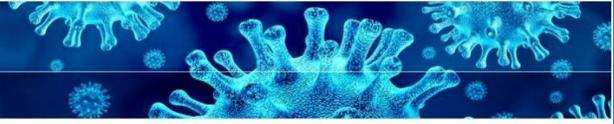
What should I do if I miss my first or second vaccine appointment?

- It depends on where you made your appointment. Always check your vaccination appointment confirmation email or text message to see if there are specific instructions for rescheduling your appointment. If you cannot



COVID-19 Information

Office of Health Services 443-809-6368



find your appointment confirmation or there are no instructions, check the website where you were scheduled for more information.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [Key Things to Know about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19](#)

[Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#)