

After Vaccination: Guidance for people who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19



What happens to my body after I am vaccinated?

COVID-19 vaccines help our bodies develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without us having to get the illness. Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection, but with all types of vaccines, the body is left with a supply of “memory” cells that will remember how to fight that virus in the future.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to produce memory cells after vaccination. Therefore, it is possible that a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and then get sick because the vaccine did not have enough time to provide protection.

Sometimes after vaccination, the process of building immunity can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity.

How long will it take for the vaccine to protect me and those around me?

You will not be immediately protected from COVID-19 after receiving the vaccine. Studies show that it takes about two weeks after your last dose for your body to fully protect itself against illness.

It may be possible that someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 could develop a mild or asymptomatic infection and even possibly spread the virus to others. More studies are needed to determine this. In the meantime, it is important to continue taking COVID-19 precautions. Continue wearing masks and practicing physical distancing.

While no vaccine is 100% effective, Pfizer and Moderna have reported that their vaccines are about 95% effective.

Do I need to quarantine from possible exposure after I have received two doses of the vaccine?

For most people, if a full two weeks have passed since your final dose of the vaccine, you do not need to quarantine if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, but you should still wear a mask and physically distance. The exception is if you live and work in a congregate setting or with high-risk populations (such as a correctional facility or homeless shelter). In that case, you may still be required to quarantine after exposure even after you are fully vaccinated.

- If it has been less than two weeks since your second dose of the vaccine, [you should quarantine](#) if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Whether or not you are in quarantine, watch for symptoms in the 14 days after exposure and get tested

if you start to develop symptoms. If you test positive, [you will need to isolate](#).

- Note that PCR test results will not be affected by the vaccine. A positive PCR test generally indicates recent COVID-19 infection.

Do I need to isolate if I develop COVID-19 like symptoms more than one or two weeks after getting the second dose of the vaccine?

Yes. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time after being fully vaccinated, you should isolate and contact your health care provider for instructions on whether to be tested for COVID-19 or other infections.