

HENRY FORD HEALTH

FAQs about COVID-19 Vaccines and Boosters

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Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine during Ramadan (April 1 through May 1, 2022)? According to Imam Ibrahim Kazerooni, Islamic Center of America (Dearborn): "The vaccines don't contain any food-related substances, nor do they have any vitamin issues. They are okay to be taken. Such vaccines don't invalidate your fast."

The COVID-19 vaccine will not invalidate the fast because it has no nutritional value and is injected into the muscle. A fasting person is not allowed to take food, water or medicine through open passages such as the mouth or nose, or intravenously. Because the vaccine is given in the muscle, it does not affect an open passage. Similar guidelines have covered flu shots and other vaccinations during Ramadan.

If you get vaccinated or receive a booster during Ramadan, fasting will not affect your immune response. If you are worried about side effects and that you will not be able to take Tylenol after your vaccination, these tips may help:

- Try to schedule your appointment later in the day, so you can rest after receiving the vaccine.
- After your vaccination, take Tylenol at iftar or *suhour* to ease side effects. (Do not take Tylenol before receiving the vaccine, as it may lessen the immune response.)
- Put a cold washcloth over the vaccination site if it is sore.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine at Henry Ford Health? If you are a current Henry Ford Health patient, you can schedule an appointment to receive the Pfizer vaccine or a Pfizer booster, when you are eligible, at a Henry Ford Health primary care site using [MyChart](#) or by calling your doctor's office. If you do not have MyChart, [register for MyChart today](#). If you are not a Henry Ford Health patient, we encourage you to visit www.michigan.gov/covidvaccine for vaccination sources near you.

Do I need to receive the same vaccine for my first and second doses? Yes, you should receive the same vaccine for your first and second doses. However, you can receive a different brand for a booster.

If I've had COVID-19, do I need to get vaccinated? Yes. The data is clear: Natural immunity is not better. The COVID-19 vaccines create more effective and longer-lasting immunity than natural immunity from infection:

- More than a third of COVID-19 infections result in zero protective antibodies.
- Natural immunity fades faster than vaccine immunity.
- Natural immunity alone is less than half as effective than natural immunity plus vaccination.

If you've had COVID-19 recently, wait until you are feeling better and you no longer need to isolate to before getting vaccinated.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines effective against the new variants? At this time, the vaccines appear to be protective against the variants of COVID-19. However, they may be less effective

against the variants compared to the original strain of the virus. It is important to get a booster when you are eligible to protect against new variants. Researchers are working to determine just how protective the vaccines are against the new strains. They are also studying new vaccines that may protect against these variants.

How will my vaccination be documented? For Henry Ford Health patients, our electronic medical record will be updated each time you receive a vaccine dose, including which vaccine you received and when. You will also be given a vaccination card at the time of your first dose. Please keep this card with you when you return for your second dose and booster dose. You should also keep it for your own records. **Helpful hints:** Take a photo of your vaccination card or record and keep it on your phone. Do not laminate your card.

If I get vaccinated somewhere other than Henry Ford Health, will my vaccination be part of my Henry Ford Health medical record? Yes, but only if you are vaccinated in the state of Michigan. If you are vaccinated at another location, the record of your vaccine will become part of your medical record at Henry Ford Health. You will see it in your MyChart account.

How are the vaccines different? Pfizer and Moderna are messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines, which cause the body to make a viral “spike protein” that activates the immune system to fight off the coronavirus by mimicking the infection. People need to get two shots spaced several weeks apart.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a viral vector vaccine, which is given as a one-time shot. It uses a harmless version of a virus to deliver important instructions to our cells. For this vaccine, a virus – not the COVID-19 virus, but a different virus – enters a cell in the body and then activates the “spike protein.” This tells our immune system to begin making antibodies and activates other immune cells to fight off what it thinks is an infection.

You cannot get sick with COVID-19 from any of the vaccines. mRNA and viral vector vaccines do not contain live virus and cannot cause COVID-19. Side effects of the vaccines are a natural part of the process and show that the vaccine is working. At the end of the vaccination process, our bodies are trained to protect us against the virus that causes COVID-19.

If people can get COVID-19 after being vaccinated, why should I get the shot? There is significant evidence that being fully vaccinated makes illness less severe. The risk of infection, hospitalization, and death are all much lower in vaccinated people compared to unvaccinated people. Most patients who are hospitalized for COVID-19 are not vaccinated. If you do get COVID-19 you can still spread the virus to others.

How long does it take for full protection? It takes two weeks after your last dose of vaccine to achieve full protection.

Why does Henry Ford Health only offer the Pfizer vaccine? While all the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, Henry Ford Health made the decision to limit our vaccination supply to only the Pfizer vaccine. The COVID-19 vaccines have different storage and dosing requirements. Having the same brand of COVID-19 vaccine at our many Primary Care centers is more efficient and safer at every step. The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for the greatest range of ages, including pediatric patients. If you prefer Moderna or Johnson & Johnson, visit www.michigan.gov/covidvaccine for vaccination sources near you.

Which vaccine is approved for children? Only the Pfizer vaccine has received approval for children 5 – 11 years old. Pfizer is also approved for youth 12 – 18 years old.

How effective is the vaccine for children? The Pfizer vaccine was found to be 90.7% effective in preventing COVID-19 in children ages 5 – 11 years. In older children, age 12–18 years, it is 93% effective.

Is the child’s vaccine the same as the adult vaccine? The Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5 – 11 years has the same active ingredients as the vaccine for ages 12 and up, but it is a smaller dose – one-third the size of the adult dose. Smaller needles specially designed for children are also used.

FAQs about COVID-19 Boosters

Can I get a booster at Henry Ford Health? Henry Ford Health offers boosters of Pfizer to established patients at our primary care centers. Most patients who previously received Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson can receive a booster of the Pfizer vaccine. (Please see special guidelines for people who are immunocompromised.) Schedule an appointment for a booster using MyChart.

When can I get a COVID-19 booster?

- Ages 12+ who were vaccinated with Pfizer at least 5 months ago can receive a booster shot. (Ages 12-17 must receive a Pfizer booster.)
- Ages 18+ who were vaccinated with Moderna at least 5 months ago can receive a booster shot.
- Ages 18+ who were vaccinated with Johnson & Johnson at least 2 months ago can receive a booster shot of any vaccine.
- Regardless of the vaccine you already received, if you are 18+ you can receive any vaccine for your booster shot.
- Henry Ford Health offers the Pfizer vaccine and boosters.

I’m immunocompromised – how is the booster schedule different for me?

Immunocompromised people ages 5-11 who received Pfizer should receive three doses:

- Dose 1: Pfizer
- Dose 2: Pfizer, three weeks (21 days) after dose 1
- Dose 3: Pfizer, 28 days after dose 2
- A fourth dose (booster) is not recommended for people ages 5-11.

Immunocompromised people ages 12+ who received Pfizer should receive four doses:

- Dose 1: Pfizer
- Dose 2: Pfizer, three weeks (21 days) after dose 1
- Dose 3: Pfizer, four weeks (28 days) after dose 2

- Dose 4/Booster Dose: Three months after dose 3. Pfizer for ages 12-17, any mRNA vaccine for ages 18+. This dose is considered a booster.

Immunocompromised people ages 18+ who received Moderna should receive four doses:

- Dose 1: Moderna
- Dose 2: Moderna, four weeks (28 days) after dose 1
- Dose 3: Moderna, four weeks (28 days) after dose 2
- Dose 4/Booster Dose: Three months after dose 3. This dose can be Pfizer or Moderna. This dose is considered a booster.

Henry Ford Health offers boosters of Pfizer for immunocompromised patients who previously received Moderna.

Immunocompromised people ages 18+ who received Johnson & Johnson should receive three doses:

- Dose 1: Johnson & Johnson
- Dose 2: An mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) 28 days after your first dose
- Dose 3: A booster of an mRNA vaccine two months after dose 2

Will the booster shot improve my protection against the Delta and Omicron variants? Yes, it will improve your protection against all strains of the COVID-19 virus, including the Delta and Omicron variants. It will also reduce the chances of getting very sick, if you do contract COVID-19.

Will side effects be worse after the booster? Side effects after a booster of Moderna or Pfizer are similar to what people experienced after receiving the first two shots. Most symptoms are mild to moderate, and the most common side effects are fatigue and injection-site pain. People who received a booster of Johnson & Johnson reported milder side effects than the original shot.

What are the risks of getting the booster? The safety profile is the same as for the first and second vaccine doses.

Vaccine Safety FAQs

How do we know the mRNA vaccines don't have any long-term effects? While the vaccines may be new, the mRNA technology used to create them has been used for decades in treatments for cancer, influenza, ZIKA and rabies. This experience has informed us that unknown, delayed side effects show up within two months of receiving the vaccine. These vaccines have been in use for many months, since the first vaccine trials were conducted over a year ago. There are no long-term side effects to worry about.

Do the vaccines have any side effects? Yes, similar to other vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccines can cause: injection site pain, redness and swelling, fever, muscle pain, tiredness, chills, headache and nausea. The frequency of these side effects may be greater than with other vaccines. While the symptoms may be uncomfortable, and at times intense, they should go away within 24-48 hours. Most people are able to perform their normal daily activities.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be taken after vaccination to help with any symptoms you have. If symptoms persist, please contact your primary care provider.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine and another vaccine, like the flu shot, at the same time? Yes. COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time as other vaccines for children and adults.

Is the Johnson & Johnson vaccine safe for women? Yes, but women younger than 50 years old should be aware of the rare but increased risk of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS). TTS is a serious condition that involves blood clots with low platelets. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are not associated with this risk. You may feel more comfortable choosing one of these vaccines if you are a woman under 50.

Should I be concerned about heart inflammation? Heart inflammation (also called myocarditis and pericarditis) has been reported in young adults after mRNA COVID-19 vaccination with Pfizer or Moderna, but it is rare. If you have concerns, please talk with your doctor or your child's doctor.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine cause a false positive on a mammogram? Yes, when the body is building an immune response to the vaccine, in a very small percentage of people, it can cause the lymph nodes to swell temporarily. If the lymph nodes under the arm are swollen, it could cause a false positive on a mammogram. Schedule a routine mammogram either before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine or four weeks after receiving a second dose.