TN Department of Health

# COVID-19 Vaccines:

## Vaccine Information: mRNA Vaccines

## What are COVID-19 Vaccines?

- There are many COVID-19 vaccines in development.
- Currently, there are two mRNA vaccines that have been approved for use in the United States. Both of these vaccines have shown that they can reduce the chance of getting COVID-19 by 95%.
- The two vaccines in use in the United States are the Moderna Vaccine and the Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine.
- Both mRNA vaccines require two doses to provide protection against the virus.
- Early data show the vaccines are effective across all ages, races, and health conditions.

## How do mRNA vaccines work?

- mRNA vaccines provide the body with a genetic "recipe" so the body can produce the "spike protein" that is found on the surface of the virus. The body sees the protein as foreign and makes antibodies to destroy it. If the body is later infected with the virus, the antibodies recognize the spike protein and destroy the virus before it can cause illness.
- COVID-19 mRNA vaccines are given in the upper arm muscle.

## When will I be able to get a vaccine?

- While vaccine supply is limited, first priority will be to vaccinate hospital staff who have direct contact with patients or materials that are potential infectious as well as first responders with direct contact to the public (e.g., EMS and law enforcement). Eventually, anyone who wants a vaccine will be able to get a vaccine unless there is a medical contraindication.
- For more information regarding the phases of vaccine distribution in Tennessee, please visit https://covid19.tn.gov/covid-19-vaccines/vaccine-phases/.

## Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?

- **Yes!** Vaccine safety is the first priority!
- These vaccines have already been given to tens of thousands of volunteers and have been shown to be safe and very effective at preventing them from getting sick with COVID-19.
- The vaccine will continue to be monitored to make sure any rare problems are found as soon as possible and studied to see if they were caused by the vaccine.
- While the possibility of a rare but serious adverse event cannot be ruled out, rare events could occur in <0.01% of people who receive a COVID-19 vaccine. The case fatality rate of COVID-19 in Tennessee is currently >1%, or approximately 100 times greater than the chance of the vaccine causing a serious event.

**Remember, vaccines don't work unless people get vaccinated. Please help control the pandemic by receiving a vaccine when it is offered to you!**

**For more information, please visit**

**COVID-19 Vaccine Facts**

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# COVID-19 Vaccines:
## mRNA Vaccine Second Dose Information

### What happens if I don't get the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine?

You likely won't be protected against COVID-19. The first dose "primes" the immune system. The second dose creates the lasting protection.

### What happens if I don't get the second dose of vaccine on time?

You need to go get it as soon as possible, even if you are late.

### I didn't feel well after the first dose. Will I feel bad after the second?

Just as with the first dose, it is not uncommon to experience low-grade fever, fatigue, or headache after you receive the vaccine. These symptoms usually go away after a day or two. The symptoms of COVID-19 are often much worse and can be life-threatening. It's important to get the second dose to protect yourself, your family and your community.

### Where can I get the second dose?

The facility that gave you the first dose should give you your second dose. Contact them or your local health department.

### Do I have to get the same vaccine as last time?

YES! There are currently TWO different vaccines available (Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech). You MUST get the same brand you received the first time. If you do not know which one you received, the facility where you received your first dose can help you or you can contact your local health department.

**Reminder**: Check the vaccine card that was given to you when you received your first dose or check your phone to see if you took a picture of it.

→ **Pfizer Vaccine** is due 21 days after the first dose.

→ **Moderna Vaccine** is due 28 days after the first dose.

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