

## Frequently Asked Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccination

### **ELIGIBILITY, AND REQUIREMENTS**

#### **When will I be able to receive a COVID-19 Vaccine?**

Information about eligibility and timeline can be found at [ct.gov/covidvaccine/access](https://ct.gov/covidvaccine/access). We do not expect that a vaccine will be widely available to the general public until late summer or the fall of 2021.

#### **Is the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory?**

No. The State of Connecticut is not mandating vaccination.

### **PRIVACY**

#### **If I get a vaccination, where will my information go? Can I be sure it will be kept safe?**

Your personal and health care information will be kept private, and will not be shared outside of your medical provider's office, and the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Personal identifying information is not shared with law enforcement or the federal government.

### **GETTING THE VACCINE**

#### **Where do I go for a vaccination?**

When you are eligible for a vaccination, you will most likely work through your medical provider, or the employer coordinator at your workplace to learn about the specifics of your eligibility requirements. Vaccines will be able to be administered in a wide range of places: physician's offices, hospitals, pharmacies, community health centers, and other locations that would normally administer vaccinations.

### **THE ROLL OUT IN CONNECTICUT**

#### **How much vaccine is CT getting?**

Vaccination amounts are being allocated on a per capita basis by the federal government, and updates about numbers will be released on an on-going basis.

#### **What is the timeline for the state to make vaccine available to more residents?**

Vaccines will start to become available quickly after the required Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) are in place. We are currently in the first phase of Phase 1b. There may be some overlap between phases as new populations are made eligible even as groups in the first phase continue to receive vaccination.

### **THE VACCINE**

#### **Is there a difference between the vaccinations that I can take?**

There are only small differences, but both vaccines currently authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are highly effective based on trials. Below, you'll see some basic details about both.

<b><i>Vaccine</i></b>	<b><i>Age Requirements</i></b>	<b><i>Recommended Time Between Doses</i></b>
<i>Pfizer</i>	<i>16+</i>	<i>21 days</i>
<i>Moderna</i>	<i>18+</i>	<i>28 days</i>

#### **Do I get to choose which vaccine brand I want to receive?**

In general, given scarce supply, only one vaccine may be available through your provider. You can talk with

your medical provider if you have specific questions or concerns that may lead you to want to seek out one specific COVID-19 vaccine versus another.

## **THE SECOND DOSE**

### **How do I know when to schedule my second vaccination?**

Most providers will ask you to schedule your first and second vaccination at the same time, and will help you set up reminders via text, email, or phone call about your second dose.

### **What if I miss my second shot?**

You should talk to your provider about what next steps you need to take if you miss an appointment for your second vaccination. You will likely be able to get your second vaccination within a short time period of the recommended date, and it will remain effective.

## **VACCINATION TRIALS**

### **Can people who have already had COVID-19 get the vaccine?**

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you get vaccinated even if you have already had COVID-19 because you can catch it more than once. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection will last.

### **How do we know the vaccines are safe?**

The Pfizer vaccine alone had a trial of over 40,000 people over a period of many months without any serious incidents. No vaccines will be available to the public without the review of the federal government and the Science Subcommittee of Governor Lamont's Vaccine Advisory Group. In Connecticut, we continue to make every decision with public health as a number one priority.

### **Since the vaccine is so new, how do you know there won't be long term health effects from taking it?**

Because all COVID-19 vaccines are new, it will take more time and more people getting vaccinated to learn about very rare or possible long-term effects. At least 8 weeks' worth of safety data were gathered in the clinical trials for all the authorized vaccines and it's unusual for vaccine side effects to appear more than 8 weeks after vaccination.

## **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES**

### **My relative is in a nursing home, can I visit once the residents are vaccinated?**

You should continue to follow guidelines released by the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

### **If I'm vaccinated, can I visit family in the hospital or nursing home?**

You should continue to follow guidelines released by the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

### **Am I going to be required to carry verification that I've been vaccinated?**

No. Although your provider will make sure that their records reflect you have received vaccine in order to most effectively treat you in the future.

### **Once I'm vaccinated, can I stop wearing a mask and social distancing?**

No. Not everyone you come into contact with will have received the vaccine, and you may still be able to spread COVID-19. It is critical to follow basic public health best practices for the foreseeable future.

### **RISK OF INFECTION, AND SAFETY**

#### **Can I still get COVID-19 after my first shot? What about after my second shot?**

Yes and yes. While you will have some protection from COVID-19 after the first shot, you will not receive the full benefit of the vaccine until roughly 10-14 days after your second shot. As with the flu vaccine, you may still contract, and transmit, COVID-19 after you are fully vaccinated, but any symptoms you may experience should be less severe and resolve quicker. Therefore, it is important that you continue wearing a face mask, social distancing and taking other precautions until two weeks after your second shot.

#### **What are the side effects of the vaccine?**

Those who receive the vaccine may experience mild symptoms of COVID-19 and soreness at the site of injection.

#### **Is it safe to get vaccinated if I have an underlying health condition?**

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for people with underlying health problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity. People with these conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. It is recommended that people with these conditions get vaccinated. Individuals who have had prior allergic reactions to injectable medicines should consult with their medical providers before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

#### **I've had allergic reactions to other shots, can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

You should talk with your provider about what allergies may make it risky for you to get the COVID-19 vaccination, but, it has proven safe in the vast majority of instances.

#### **Can the vaccine give me COVID-19?**

No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use or in development in the United States use the live virus that causes COVID-19. However, it typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick.

#### **I have a food allergy, can I get the vaccine?**

Yes.

#### **I have seasonal allergies, can I get the vaccine?**

Yes.

#### **Can I still get COVID-19 after I'm vaccinated?**

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. However, if you still get infected after you get vaccinated, the vaccine may prevent serious illness.