

# VACCINE SAFETY

Safe & Effective Protection Against COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines are bringing us new hope and a path back to our lives. Having concerns about something new is normal. But don't worry. We're here to help provide you with answers to your most pressing questions about vaccine safety.

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

No. You can't get COVID from a vaccine. None of the vaccines contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. So, a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

## Who approves vaccines and says they are safe?

In the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) evaluates the safety and effectiveness of all vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines.

FDA staff are career scientists and physicians, recognized around the world for their expertise in evaluating vaccines. These public health experts analyze data from vaccine makers and clinical trials to make scientific decisions.

## Were vaccines approved too fast?

No. All COVID-19 vaccines go through rigorous testing and evaluation before receiving Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

It is important to remember that in public health emergencies, the development process for medical testing, treatment, and vaccines must still get approval from the FDA. The FDA has very strict standards that require a combination of clinical, non-clinical, and manufacturing data to be evaluated as part of the EUA process.

Even though the emergency process may be different than routine reviews, all vaccines must meet criteria regulated by law before they get an EUA. That includes multiple clinical trials to determine the safety and effectiveness of a vaccine.

## What does "Emergency Use Authorization" or "EUA" mean?

Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) is a type of emergency approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It is used to make vaccines and other medical measures available during public health emergencies.

Vaccines can get an EUA from the FDA only after going through a rigorous evaluation of clinical, non-clinical, and manufacturing data to ensure it is safe, effective, and meets all quality standards.

## What are the side effects of the vaccine?

The most common side effects are temporary pain and swelling in the arm where you got the shot. Other side effects include fever, chills, tiredness, and headache.

Not everyone experiences side effects from the vaccine. But if you do, it's a normal sign that your body is building protection. These side effects may feel like flu symptoms and may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away within a few hours to a few days. If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your healthcare provider about taking an over-the-counter medicine, like ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

## What should I do if I experience side effects after my vaccine?

Most side effects from COVID-19 vaccines are mild and should go away after a few days. However, if your side effects are severe or last longer than expected, contact your healthcare provider. Or call 9-1-1 if it is an emergency.

If you have a smartphone, you may consider signing up for the v-safe after vaccination health checker. It is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messages and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Through the tool, you can quickly tell the CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from the CDC may call to check on you and get more information. V-safe will also remind you to get your second vaccine shot if you need one. You can learn more and register at the [CDC's website](#).

In addition, if you experience unexpected side effects, you may want to report your side effects to the federal government. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) is a national early warning system to detect possible safety problems in U.S.-licensed vaccines. VAERS is co-managed by the CDC and the FDA. VAERS accepts and analyzes reports of adverse events (possible side effects) after a person has received a vaccination. Anyone can report an adverse event to VAERS. Healthcare professionals are required to report certain adverse events, and vaccine manufacturers are required to report all adverse events that come to their attention. You can submit a [report online](#).