

COVID-19

MYTHS and FACTS

Information You Need to Know

Project ALIVE



Accessible Life-saving Integrated Vaccine Equity

Project ALIVE was supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,900,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

These messages are brought to you by Project ALIVE, as a part of our advocacy to support your independence and well-being. There are many rumors and much confusion and controversy about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines. We hope these educational tools may help clarify some things for you. Feel free to contact us for further information.



Project ALIVE (Accessible Life-saving Integrated Vaccine Equity) is a focused effort to remove barriers to vaccinations for people with disabilities living in the rural areas of Arkansas, Montana, and Missouri. The goal is to help those wanting a vaccine and needing support to access one.

Rooted in the values of self-determination and self-direction, the project does not seek to persuade or convince, but will serve as a resource to provide equitable vaccination planning, programs, services, and procedures.

Project ALIVE is partnered with:

Summit Independent Living Center
Phone: (406) 215-1604

**Living Independently for Today
& Tomorrow (LIFTT)**
Phone: (406) 259-5181



Sources for this document:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>;

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>;

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-exposure.html#:~:text=Being%20closer%20to%20someone%20who,to%20someone%20with%20COVID%2D19>

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MYTH

Ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccine are dangerous.

FACT

Nearly all ingredients in vaccines are also ingredients in many foods – including fats, sugars, and salts.

Some important information about the vaccines:

Exact ingredients vary by manufacturer, but **none** of the vaccines use any live virus. This means that the COVID-19 vaccine cannot give you COVID.

The **Pfizer-BioNTech** and **Moderna** vaccines contains manufactured ingredients that teach your body to fight COVID-19.

Researchers have been studying and working with this type of vaccine for decades.

Johnson & Johnson (J&J/Janssen) contains a harmless version of a virus unrelated to COVID-19.

Updated COVID-19 boosters (**bivalent vaccines**) can help you stay safe. They contain harmless ingredients from two strains of the virus which provide added protection. The bivalent vaccine does not give you COVID-19.

You should get the COVID-19 vaccine and boosters because you can protect yourself and those around you from the dangerous symptoms or from dying from COVID-19.



MYTH

A COVID-19 vaccine can make me sick with COVID-19.

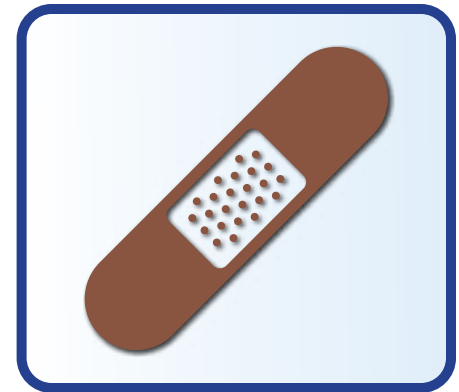
FACT

None of the COVID-19 vaccines cause COVID-19.

None of the vaccines in the U.S. use any live virus. **This means that the COVID-19 vaccine cannot give you COVID.**

COVID-19 vaccines teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight COVID-19.

Many people experience side effects. Side effects are often signs that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Side effects usually go away after a few days.



Usual [side effects](#) include:

- **Side effects in children younger than 17 years old include:**

- Pain at the injection site
- Irritability/crying
- Loss of appetite
- Sleepiness/tiredness
- Headaches
- Muscle or joint pain
- Chills and swollen lymph nodes

- **Side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine for those 18 years of age and older include:**
 - Pain
 - Redness and/or swelling at the injection site
 - Tiredness
 - Headache
 - Muscle pain
 - Chills and fever

The side effects for all vaccines, including boosters, are the same.

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) can be used by you or your healthcare provider to report possible side effects.

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code below to visit the VAERS site:



MYTH

COVID-19 is no more serious than the flu.

FACT

Compared to the flu, COVID-19 can make you sicker and is easier to spread.

Getting COVID-19 can be worse than getting the flu.

Compared to someone with the flu, someone with COVID-19:

- Can be sicker,
- Can stay sick for a longer period of time,
- Could spread the virus for a longer period, and
- May take longer to show symptoms.

COVID-19 is easier to spread because people can spread the virus before they begin showing symptoms, or even if they never experience symptoms (asymptomatic people).



MYTH

You recover from COVID-19 and are done with it.

FACT

People respond to COVID-19 differently and recover from COVID-19 on their own timeline.

People get sick and respond to COVID-19 differently. Some may get COVID-19 and recover from symptoms, others may not recover from COVID-19 at all. Even if you recover from COVID-19, you can still get it again.

While not all people experience serious symptoms, some become very sick and have long-term symptoms, known as [Post-COVID Conditions \(PCC\) or Long COVID](#).

Long COVID symptoms can last weeks to years after the initial infection.

Common symptoms of Long COVID include:

- Constant tiredness
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Cough



Other possible symptoms of Long COVID include:

- Difficulty thinking or concentrating
- Dizziness when you stand
- Loss of smell or taste
- Heart symptoms or conditions, including chest pain and fast or pounding heartbeat
- Changes in the menstrual cycle
- Persistent joint or muscle pain
- Digestive symptoms, including diarrhea and stomach pain
- Blood clots and blood vessel issues

As of July 2021, Long COVID can be considered a disability under the ADA.

People who are unvaccinated are more at risk to get Long COVID.

Vaccinated people who get COVID are less likely to get Long COVID, compared to people who are unvaccinated.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-long-term-effects/art-20490351>

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MYTH

COVID-19 vaccines will affect my fertility.

FACT

No vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, causes problems becoming pregnant.

None of the public or private agencies that monitor adverse drug effects have found any effects related to fertility.

People who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future should get the COVID-19 vaccine.

If you are pregnant or were recently pregnant, you are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 compared to people who are not pregnant. Additionally, if you have COVID-19 during pregnancy, you are at increased risk of complications that can affect your pregnancy and developing baby.

If you are pregnant, getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you from getting very sick from COVID-19.



MYTH

There's no use in getting vaccinated because new variants keep popping up.

FACT

Vaccinations can help stop new variants.

As the virus spreads, it is likely to change. High vaccination rates reduce spread and help prevent new variants from appearing.

The more people vaccinated, the less chance a virus will spread in your community. The fewer infected people, the less opportunity for the virus to mutate.



MYTH

There is no need to wear face masks.

FACT

Wearing a respirator or a face mask prevents COVID-19 from spreading.

COVID-19 spreads through droplets and particles released into the air when you breathe, talk, cough, or sneeze. Respirators or face masks help prevent the virus from spreading, especially in places with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

Types of Masks



N95 and Other Respirators

N95 and KN95 respirators offer the highest level of protection. Respirators are made to protect you by filtering the air you breathe, and protect others by capturing droplets and particles so you do not spread them to others.



Procedural and Surgical Masks

Medical grade surgical or procedural masks provide good protection due to their filtration and fluid resistance.



Transparent Medical Masks

Transparent medical masks are surgical masks with a piece of clear plastic in front of one's mouth. They allow others to see your mouth and lips when access to facial expressions and lipreading is necessary.



Multi-Layered Cloth Masks

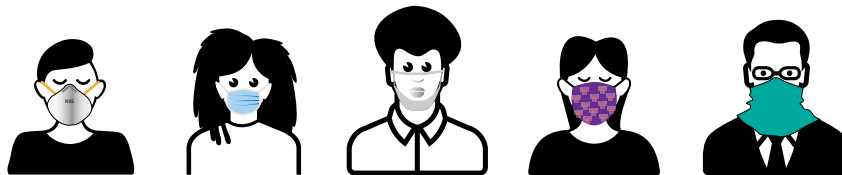
Multi-layered cloth masks can provide some protection if they are worn consistently and properly.



Gaiters and Bandanas

Neck gaiters and bandanas are not to be confused with cloth masks. These types of face coverings **do not work as a proper face mask would.**

When choosing a mask, it is important to pick one that fits you well.



Make sure:

- Your mask fits snugly over your nose, mouth, and chin.
- There are no gaps around the outside edges of the mask.
- No air flows through from the top or the sides of the mask.

Some people with disabilities cannot wear masks. Talk with your doctor or someone at your CIL to find options for you.

Not everyone will have access to the type of masks that they need to stay safe. Connect with your Center for Independent Living (CIL) to find out ways to get the masks you need.

Sources:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-face-masks-what-you-need-to-know>;
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>

MYTH

Social distancing doesn't make a difference; you either will or won't catch COVID-19.

FACT

Being too close to people who may have COVID-19 increases your chances of getting with COVID-19.

When you are near others, you are more exposed to COVID-19. Small particles that people breathe out can contain the virus. The closer you are to a greater number of people, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID 19.

Distancing protects people you want to keep safe. Avoid crowded areas and keep distance between you and other people.



MYTH

There is a cure for COVID-19.

FACT

There is no cure for COVID-19.

Several dangerous myths exist about prevention measures and cures, such as drinking alcohol, bleach, or homemade treatments. None of them work, and some, such as drinking bleach or drinking too much alcohol, can be harmful.



Source: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters#:~:text=FACT%3A%20Drinking%20alcohol,can%20be%20infected>
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