COVID-19 VACCINE: GET VACCINATED

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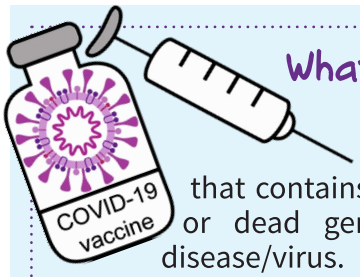


What are vaccines?

Vaccines are a powerful medicine that contains the same weakened or dead germs that cause the disease/virus. For example, the measles vaccine contains the measles virus and the seasonal flu vaccine contains the current flu strand virus. Vaccines provide a safe substitute to expose your body to the virus, which then stimulates your immune system to produce antibodies. Lastly, the antibodies produced by your body allows you to develop immunity to the virus. Vaccines are very powerful medicine, because **"unlike most medicines which treat or cure diseases, vaccines prevent them"** *(cdc.gov- "Vaccines: The Basics")*.

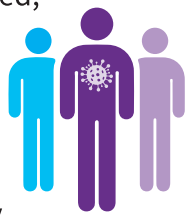
How does the COVID-19 vaccine differ from other vaccines?

According to the Louisiana Department of Health **"unlike many vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccine does not contain a dead or a weakened virus that triggers an immune response.** Instead, the COVID-19 vaccine contains a genetic instruction manual that tells your immune system how to respond and protect you from exposure to the actual virus.

The technology used in the vaccines is not new. It is called Messenger Ribonucleic Acid (mRNA), and it has been around for decades. This is the first-time mRNA has been used in a vaccine, but the effect is the same as other vaccines. Your body gets protection without the serious consequesnces of a severe illness due to COVID-19 exposure."

What is herd immunity and how does it work?

"Herd immunity, also referred to as population immunity, is a concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached. Herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not exposing them to it. With herd immunity, the vast majority of a population are vaccinated, lowering the overall amount of the virus able to spread in the whole population, breaking any chains of transmission" *(Louisiana Department of Health)*.

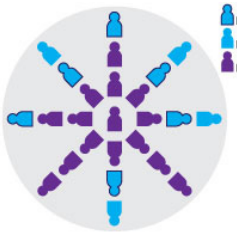


According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "experts estimate that herd immunity would require at least 60-70% of the U.S. population to have COVID-19 immunity, that translates to roughly 200 million people. The U.S. population is around 328 million."

THE SCIENCE BEHIND HOW HERD IMMUNITY WORKS

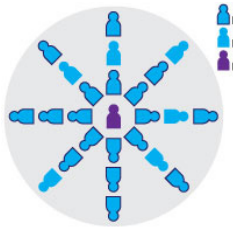
NO IMMUNITY

In a community where **very few are immune** to a virus, a disease can spread rapidly and lead to an outbreak. As individuals acquire immunity, wither through infection or a vaccine, the disease spreads more slowly because fewer people can pass it on.



IMMUNITY THROUGH VACCINATION

In a community where **enough members are vaccinated**, the disease will stop spreading because the virus will not be able to find susceptible hosts.



Louisiana Department of Health

Sources: cdc.gov: "Vaccines: The Basics", Louisiana Department of Health, World Health Organization

Addressing Common Concerns!

- "Before a vaccine is ever given to people, the FDA oversees extensive lab testing. Once a vaccine is licensed, the FDA, CDC, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other federal agencies routinely monitor its use and investigate any potential safety concerns." *(cdc.gov)*
- "Like any medicine, vaccines can cause side effects such as a low-grade fever, or pain and redness at injection site. Mild reactions go away within a few days on their own." *(cdc.gov)*
- "Severe, long lasting side effects are extremely rare." *(cdc.gov)*

COVID-19 FAQs

Q: If I have already recovered from COVID-19, should I still get the vaccination?

A: "COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection or not" *(cdc.gov)*.

Q: If I am social distancing and wearing a mask, why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: "Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others" *(cdc.gov)*.

Q: How long will it take for my body to develop immunity after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination.

Q: How well does Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine prevent COVID-19?

A: The vaccine was 95% effective in preventing COVID-19 disease among 18,198 clinical trial participants. Of the 18,198 people in the study, eight tested positive for COVID-19. Additionally, only one of the 8 positive cases were classified as severe.

Q: Did the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine clinical trial include racial/ ethnic groups that are at a greater risk from COVID-19?

A: "Yes. Overall, among the total participants who received either Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine or placebo, 9.1% were Black or African American, 28.0% were Hispanic/Latino, 4.3% were Asian, and 0.5% were American Indian/Alaska native" *(fda.gov)*.

Q: How well does the Moderna Covid-19 Vaccine prevent Covid-19?

A: The vaccine was 94.1% effective in preventing COVID-19 disease among 14,134 clinical trial participants with 11 cases of COVID-19 in the vaccine group. Zero of the 11 cases were classified as severe.

Q: Did the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine clinical trial include racial/ ethnic groups that are at a greater risk from COVID-19?

A: "Yes. Overall, 20.5% of participants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 10.2% as African American or Black, 4.6% as Asian, 0.8% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.2% as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2.1% identified their race as other, and 2.1% as multiracial" *(fda.gov)*.

Q: How much is the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: As part of the U.S. government, "Operation Warp Speed" *(the vaccine doses purchased with taxpayer dollars)* will be no cost to the person receiving the vaccine. However, providers may charge an administrative or office visit fee *(Louisiana Department of Health)*.

Sources: cdc.gov, fda.gov, Louisiana Department of Health, World Health Organization

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