

**Sections:**

- [CAREGIVERS: Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)
- [PATIENTS & GENERAL PUBLIC: Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)
- [General Vaccine Information](#)
- [Science Behind the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

**Helpful Links:**

- [Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccination program](#)
- [Cleveland Clinic's patient facing vaccination site](#)
- [COVID toolkit on the intranet](#)

## CAREGIVERS: Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Program

**Q: Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine as a caregiver?**

**A:** Cleveland Clinic is offering both the Pfizer vaccine and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at various locations across Ohio. Caregivers can receive the vaccine at Occupational Health or through various other locations throughout the area. [Read more](#).

Cleveland Clinic is providing the free vaccine until every person who wants it has the opportunity to receive it. This is a personal choice and is not mandatory. We encourage all of you who are interested to take advantage of this opportunity.

**Q: How do I schedule a vaccine appointment(s)?**

**A:** Caregivers and patients can schedule their vaccine appointments in MyChart or call 216.448.4117 Tuesday – Friday from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. ET or walk in to an Occupational Health location in Ohio.

**Q: How can I update my medical record at Cleveland Clinic if I received the vaccine elsewhere?**

**A:** If you were vaccinated outside of a Cleveland Clinic vaccination site and you have NOT been to a Cleveland Clinic provider, please complete the following steps:

1. Take a clear photo of your completed CDC vaccination card
2. Email the photo to [COVID19@ccf.org](mailto:COVID19@ccf.org)
3. Include your full name, date of birth and employee ID in the body of the email

**Q: What should I do if I have side effects to the vaccine?**

**A:** Some commonly reported side effects are injection site swelling and tenderness, fever, muscle pain, headache and fatigue. You may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) to help with these symptoms. Most of these symptoms are more common with the second dose. Note that all caregivers and patients are monitored at the vaccine distribution location for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine for possible immediate hypersensitivity reactions.

If you are concerned about any symptoms, or side effects related to the vaccine, contact the Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246.

All caregivers who receive the vaccine are also encouraged to enroll in [v-safe, a monitoring program managed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

**Q: If I have side effects from the vaccine that cause me to miss work, will I need to use my PTO?**

**A:** If a caregiver is feeling ill and needs to stay home, they will use PTO for the time away from work. An occurrence is recorded if the call-off is not scheduled. Read more in the [COVID-19 Caregiver Exposure FAQ](#).

**Q: Will Cleveland Clinic be requiring caregivers to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A:** At this time, we are focusing on encouraging our caregivers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, providing education and making vaccination as accessible as possible. As the pandemic evolves, we will continue to monitor the situation.

**Q: Is the COVID-19 vaccine effective against the Delta variant?**

**A:** Many of the increasing cases and hospitalizations in Ohio and across the country are attributable to the Delta variant, which is twice as transmissible as the original COVID-19 strain.

Full-dose vaccination continues to be the best protection against severe illness or death for all COVID-19 strains, including the Delta variant. The mRNA vaccines (e.g., Moderna and Pfizer) are 95% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 and hospitalization from COVID-19.

**Q: Do I need to continue masking and social distancing after getting the vaccine?**

**A:** The CDC has [issued guidance](#) on public health recommendations for those who are fully vaccinated from COVID-19. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the second dose in a two-dose series (such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines) or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

According to the interim guidance, in order to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, those who are fully vaccinated should wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission. Those who are not yet vaccinated should continue to mask as well.

Wearing a mask is especially important if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.

It's important to note that this guidance does not apply to healthcare settings, and our current masking policies remain in place. All patients, visitors and caregivers at Cleveland Clinic will still be screened and required to wear a face mask in our facilities, even if they are fully vaccinated.

**Q: Can I still get COVID-19 even if I am vaccinated?**

**A:** While the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, no vaccines are 100% effective. In fact, breakthrough cases (when someone tests positive for COVID-19 more than two weeks after they're fully vaccinated) are expected. Breakthrough infections are more common in indoor settings with large groups of people, the elderly and in individuals with compromised immune systems.

The vaccines greatly reduce the risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19. Despite the presence of breakthrough infections, the far majority of COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths occur in unvaccinated individuals. We recommend everyone who is eligible receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

**Q: What should I do if I am vaccinated and have COVID-19 symptoms?**

**A:** Whether or not you have been vaccinated, call the Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 if you have symptoms or may have been exposed. Florida caregivers should call 800.546.4149. Calling to explain your situation and ensure you are taking appropriate precautions doesn't hurt!

## PATIENTS & GENERAL PUBLIC: Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Program

**Q: Which Cleveland Clinic locations are scheduling appointments for COVID-19 vaccines?**

**A:** [Visit our website](#) for an up-to-date list of locations where patients can schedule their COVID-19 vaccine appointments. Patients 12 years and older in Ohio can receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine during their primary care appointments at select locations. [Read more.](#)

Primary care appointments include family medicine, internal medicine or general pediatrics. Patients receiving their first dose can then schedule a nurse visit to receive their second dose. They may also receive their second dose during an appointment if they are due and have their vaccination card with them.

**Q: I received my first Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine elsewhere, can I receive my second dose at Cleveland Clinic?**

**A:** If you received the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, it is important to receive both doses of your vaccine in order to get the maximum benefits. If you received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for your first dose at a location other than Cleveland Clinic, we are able to schedule you for your second dose at a Cleveland Clinic location.

Cleveland Clinic has currently been allocated the two-dose vaccine made by Pfizer and the one dose vaccine made by Johnson & Johnson and is using it at our vaccination sites across Northeast Ohio. The vaccines are not interchangeable – if receiving the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, you must get both doses from the same manufacturer. Therefore, if you received the Moderna vaccine for your first dose, we recommend you contact the site where you received your first dose to schedule your next vaccination. There may also be local sites offering second doses of Moderna.

**Q: Should my teenager be vaccinated?**

**A:** In mid-May, the Pfizer vaccine was authorized for use in individuals as young as 12 years old. The other two vaccines authorized for emergency use by the FDA, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen), are authorized for individuals age 18 and over. All three vaccines have been authorized for emergency use by the FDA and have been determined to be safe and effective

We encourage all eligible individuals to get vaccinated as soon as they can. Vaccinating everyone who is eligible is important to slowing the spread of COVID-19.

Teenagers under the age of 18 who are coming to a Cleveland Clinic vaccination site must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or provide written consent from their parent or guardian in order to receive the vaccine.

**Q: When will younger children be able to get vaccinated?**

**A:** Anyone who is age 12 and older is now eligible to schedule their COVID-19 vaccine. Some drug companies are also now expanding their vaccine clinical trials to include younger children and babies as young as 6 months old. This is a crucial step in our efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19. These pediatric vaccine trials will provide critical safety data, and help us better understand the vaccine's immune response in children. As we wait, we must continue to mask, social distance, wash hands frequently and avoid gatherings.

**Q: Does Cleveland Clinic vaccinate hospitalized patients?**

**A:** Beginning March 16, patients admitted to main campus, Fairview, Hillcrest and Medina are eligible to receive the second dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. This process allows inpatients the ability to complete their COVID-19 vaccine series in a timely manner, if they are anticipated to be admitted when they are past due for their second dose. [Read more.](#)

Beginning Tuesday, June 8, providers with prescribing rights can order the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen), one-shot COVID-19 vaccine for inpatients 18 years and older at several locations in Northeast Ohio. [Read more.](#)

## General Vaccine Information

**Q: What processes does Cleveland Clinic use to ensure safe vaccine distribution?**

**A:** This is a complex and tightly managed process unlike any other vaccination program we've provided. Cleveland Clinic is following all federal and state guidelines to ensure safe distribution of the vaccine. We are following a number of processes to ensure safety, including:

- Strict temperature monitoring of vaccines once they are received, transferred to storage and distributed to the vaccination sites.
- Additional training of personnel administering the vaccines on the reconstitution, temperature stability and side effects of the vaccine.
- Required 15-minute waiting period (monitoring) in the vaccination site after receiving the vaccine.
- Presence of equipment and personnel trained to deliver immediate medical treatment in the event of a severe vaccine reaction, such as anaphylaxis.
- Reporting to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) any vaccination administration errors, series adverse events, or any cases of COVID-19 that result in hospitalization or death. For more information on VAERS, go [here](#).
- Distribution of education materials to vaccinated individuals on what to expect after a vaccination, and contact information to be used if they experience an adverse reaction. Each vaccinated individual has the option to sign up with the [y-safe health checker app](#) that sends symptom checks and reminders on the second dose.

- Caregivers experiencing symptoms following the first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine can speak with a nurse on the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline by calling 216.445.8246.

**Q: Which vaccine does Cleveland Clinic distribute at its vaccination clinics and FHCs?**

**A:** Currently, we are offering the two-dose vaccine made by Pfizer and the one dose vaccine made by Johnson & Johnson at our vaccination sites and several family health centers across Northeast Ohio. Cleveland Clinic distributes COVID-19 vaccines following state and federal guidelines and distribution.

**Q: How many doses of the vaccine are needed?**

**A:** The COVID-19 mRNA Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is administered in one dose. The vaccines are not interchangeable. Each person receiving a vaccine must get both doses with the same vaccine product from the same manufacturer. Pfizer is typically scheduled at a 21-day interval whereas Moderna is scheduled at 28. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices allows for up to 42 days between the first and second dose of COVID-19 vaccines.

**Q: If I received my first dose of Moderna at Cleveland Clinic and still need my second dose, what should I do?**

**A:** Thank you for inquiring about your second dose. It is important to receive both doses of your vaccine in order to get the maximum benefits. Your first dose was Moderna. Unfortunately, Cleveland Clinic is no longer receiving shipments of the Moderna vaccine from the state. However, there are several local sites that have indicated they have Moderna second doses available, and we recommend you contact them to schedule.

- [CVS Pharmacy](#)
- [Cleveland Department of Public Health](#) 1-833-427-5634
- [Discount Drug Mart](#)
- Neighborhood Family Practice, 216-237-6100

**Q: I received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine prior to the CDC & FDA's recommended pause – should I be worried?**

**A:** The CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended resuming the use of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine, following a pause to review a small number of episodes of clotting disorders with low platelet counts in the U.S. after receiving the vaccine. [Read more here.](#)

Currently, we are offering the two-dose vaccine made by Pfizer at our vaccination sites and select family health centers across Northeast Ohio. We monitor any reports of potential symptoms in our patients following a vaccine. The mRNA vaccines are not currently associated with any clotting disorder.

**Q: If I already had COVID-19, am I eligible to receive the vaccine?**

**A:** Yes, it is still recommended for you to receive the vaccine. You should wait to schedule the COVID-19 vaccine until you are cleared from isolation precautions.

**Q: If I have had a prior allergic reaction to the flu vaccine, should I receive a vaccine for COVID-19?**

**A:** You are still eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Because of reports of anaphylactic reactions in persons vaccinated outside of clinical trials, it is recommended that individuals who have had a severe allergic reaction to any previous vaccine discuss the nature of their reaction with their provider before scheduling a COVID-19 vaccine.

**Q: What side effects can I expect from the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A:** The mRNA vaccines stimulate your immune system; therefore, you may experience some mild to moderate symptoms including fever, muscle/joint aches, headache, fatigue, chills, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. You may also have local symptoms at the injection site including pain, swelling, redness at injection site and localized lymph node swelling.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, while not an mRNA vaccine, has similar side effects including injection site reactions: pain, redness of the skin and swelling, as well as general side effects: headache, feeling very tired, muscle aches, nausea and fever.

**Q: Is there a difference between the first and second dose of the vaccines?**

**A:** You are more likely to experience side effects and symptoms after the second dose. Most side effects reported in the clinical trials were mild to moderate. Side effects typically occur 24-48 hours after vaccine administration and can last 24-48 hours. Note: The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is administered in one dose.

**Q: What if I have a severe reaction, such as anaphylaxis, to a COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A:** You should not receive the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine until you have discussed your reaction with your provider. You may be referred to an allergist for additional evaluation.

**Q: If I am pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to conceive can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A:** Getting the vaccine while pregnant is a personal choice. Individuals who are pregnant should talk to their physician to help make a decision together. [Read more](#).

While the absolute risk for severe COVID-19 is low, reports indicate there is increased risk for pregnant women for severe COVID-19 infection. Compared with the non-pregnant woman, pregnant women with COVID-19 have increased risk of hospitalization, ICU admission and mechanical ventilation. The risk to pregnant women from Covid-19 infection is much greater than any of the reported risks from the available vaccines. Any vaccine is better than no vaccine.

We encourage you to talk to your Ob/Gyn to help make a decision about receiving the vaccine

**Q: How often will I need to get the COVID-19 vaccine? Will a booster be needed after the second dose?**

**A:** It is unknown at this point whether additional boosters will be necessary.

## Science Behind the COVID-19 Vaccine

**Q: What scientific data is available about the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines?**

**A:** You can find the available data [here](#).

**Q: Have the vaccine(s) gone through appropriate clinical trials?**

**A:** The FDA assessed the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines for safety and side effects and deemed they have met the standards [for Emergency Use Authorization](#).

While an EUA is not a full FDA license for use, it does not suggest that a product was rushed through approval. It simply means its application for review has been prioritized due to the crisis nature of the pandemic. Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson will continue to follow the trial participants for two years to assess any future safety concerns.

**Q: Where can I find more information about vaccine safety and effectiveness?**

- Learn more about the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on the [FDA website](#)
- Learn more about the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on the [FDA website](#)
- Learn more about the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine on the [FDA website](#)

**Q: What do we know about the short- and long-term effects of the vaccines?**

**A:** In the short-term, people may have mild side effects which last 1-3 days, including fatigue, headache, pain or swelling at the injection site and muscle or joint pain. If you are concerned about any symptoms or side effects from receiving the vaccine, call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246. Find more information on [vaccine development](#) and about this type of vaccine [here](#).

**Q: Did clinical trials include individuals who had COVID-19?**

**A:** The trials did try to exclude previously infected patients with COVID-19, and those with an active infection. Both manufacturers did evaluate a subgroup of patients who received the vaccine, even though they were previously infected. The vaccine effectiveness was the same.

**Q: How long does the immunization last?**

**A:** After a person receives the COVID-19 vaccination, we do not know how long protection against infection lasts beyond two months. Also, we do not know if vaccination protects against transmitting the virus to other people who are without immunity. For these reasons, vaccine recipients must continue to mask, maintain social distance and practice hand hygiene.

**Q: What is the latest information whether transplant patients or other immunocompromised patients should get the COVID-19 vaccine or not?**

**A:** We recommend talking to your physician or healthcare provider regarding COVID-19 vaccines for immunocompromised patients.

**Q: Is there any signal in the existing data that there are differences in vaccine effectiveness by race or ethnicity?**

**A:** Among different ethnic subgroups in the trials, similar high effectiveness was seen after receiving the vaccine. The ongoing trials will continue to monitor this among different racial/ethnic backgrounds, age and medical conditions.