



COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

How much vaccine will be received?

Initial doses of vaccine are expected in December in limited supply. At this point we still don't know how many doses of vaccine Indiana will receive or when larger amounts will be available. Which vaccine and in what quantities are distributed is determined by the federal government. Vaccine will be shipped to Indiana in phases.

Which vaccine will we receive?

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine received its Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and is the first vaccine we expect to receive. Moderna is awaiting review of its EUA request and will likely be the second vaccine available.

Where will it be shipped?

IDOH worked with our partners at the Indiana Hospital Association and others to set up 54 sites across the state that volunteered and have the ability to accept vaccine, knowing that the first vaccine we expect to receive needs to be stored at extremely cold temperatures. Because of that requirement, not every medical facility will be able to store it.

Who will receive vaccine first?

The Indiana Department of Health followed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for prioritizing vaccine distribution fairly and ethically. The goals are to prevent as many deaths and serious illnesses as possible, keep critical industries open, minimize health disparities and increase the overall health and well-being of Hoosiers. The state Department of Health also has assembled an ethics advisory committee of experts from across the state to review vaccine allocation plans.

We have set up a phased-in approach to determine who is eligible for vaccine first based on the most effective way to reduce the impact of COVID-19. This first round of vaccine is allocated to long-term care center staff and residents and healthcare personnel who in their line of work have the potential for exposure to COVID-19 patients or infectious material.

How many people will get the first round?

That will be based on how much vaccine we receive, but we will follow the priorities already established. No COVID-19 vaccine will be distributed until it is deemed safe by federal regulators and our own state review team.

How does the vaccine work?

The vaccines from both [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#) are what's called an mRNA or messenger RNA vaccine. That means it uses a piece of the virus that prompts the body to recognize the disease-caused part of the

virus and create an immune response to block infection. This is not live virus and can't give you COVID-19.

How effective is it? How long will the vaccine protect me?

Both Pfizer and Moderna have reported that their vaccines are about 95% effective. The trials will continue for the next few years to determine how long the vaccines provide protection. It's important to know that both vaccines are two doses. If you receive a Pfizer vaccine, you'll need to receive a second dose of Pfizer vaccine within 21 days. If you receive a Moderna vaccine, you'll need to receive a second dose of Moderna vaccine within 28 days.

How long will it take for the vaccine to protect me?

Protection occurs seven days after the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine and two weeks after the second Moderna dose.

What age groups can receive the vaccine?

The vaccine initially will only be approved for people ages 16 and older, as it hasn't been studied yet in young children or pregnant women. Studies have shown that the vaccine is effective for those older than 65.

What approval does it have from the FDA?

This vaccine has been developed from work that has been ongoing for a decade. The [Emergency Use Authorization](#) (EUA) approval is based on three phases of [trials](#) using thousands of diverse participants to determine the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. From there, the vaccine is reviewed by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The Indiana Department of Health and its advisory committee will also review any approved vaccine before it's administered in Indiana. The CDC and FDA also maintain the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) (VAERS) to monitor any reports of unexpected effects reported after vaccination.

Are healthcare providers required to take the vaccine? What if they refuse?

While healthcare professionals are encouraged to get vaccinated, it is not required.

What are the storage requirements?

Pfizer must be stored at -70 degrees C (-94 degrees F) and Moderna must be stored at -20 degrees C (-4 degrees F).

How will the doses be tracked?

The state Department of Health has established a third-party system to handle registration and administration of vaccine. This system will integrate with the Children & Hoosiers Immunization Registry Program ([CHIRP](#)), which will in turn communicate with federal systems.



How will you make sure people get the second dose?

The goal is for the individual to make an appointment to receive a second dose at the time of the first dose. The system will also send out reminders to either register for second dose or as a reminder of the appointment.

How do we know it's safe?

After a vaccine is authorized or approved for use, many vaccine safety monitoring systems watch for adverse events (possible side effects). CDC is working to expand how it monitors safety through new systems and additional information sources, as well as by scaling up existing safety monitoring systems. More information is available [from the CDC](#).

How was the vaccine developed so quickly?

Because the pandemic has had such a widespread global impact, a great number of resources were devoted to developing a vaccine. However, research started with a vaccine that was started about a decade ago for other coronaviruses, and several steps in the process were done simultaneously to save time. Better technology has also helped shorten the timeline to develop a safe and effective vaccine.

I want the COVID-19 vaccine. Where do I go to get it?

More information will be posted here about when and where the vaccine will be publicly available. The state Department of Health continues to review federal recommendations about prioritization in consultation with state advisory groups to ensure the vaccine is prioritized in an ethical manner that best protects those most at risk. More information is detailed in the state's interim [vaccination plan](#).

Is there a charge for the vaccine?

Under federal guidelines, no one is to be charged to receive the vaccine. However, your provider may bill your insurance a \$28 administration fee.

When will more vaccine be available?

That decision is made by the federal government, and updates will be posted here when available.

Are there special requirements for the vaccine?

You should not be vaccinated if you are currently have a fever or are not feeling well, are pregnant or are younger than 16.

What are the potential side effects?

For Pfizer, the side effects reported were fatigue at 3.8% and headache at 2%. Individuals may experience fatigue, headache or other symptoms such as fever, just as they do with a flu shot or Shingles vaccine. These are temporary and indicate that your body's immune system is reacting properly.

Will getting the vaccine allow me to stop wearing masks and resume large gatherings?

This vaccine will significantly increase our arsenal as we fight COVID-19 and help us win this battle. As we know there will be a limited supply of vaccine initially, it will still be essential to rely on the tools that



we know work to fight this disease, including wearing masks, practicing social distancing and staying home if you're ill.

