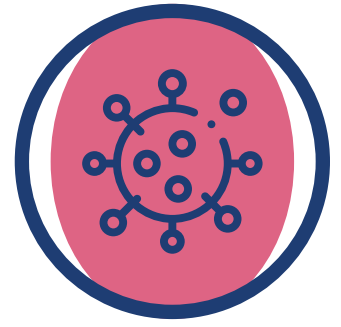# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) COVID-19 Vaccines

1. Why is vaccination important?

Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent disease. Vaccines save millions of lives each year. When we get vaccinated, we are not just protecting ourselves but also those around us.

2. How do vaccines protect communities?

When a person gets vaccinated, they are less likely to get a disease or pass the germ on to other people. When more people get vaccinated, there are fewer people left for a germ to infect, so it is harder for the germ to spread. This is called community immunity or herd immunity. Herd immunity is important because it protects people who cannot get the vaccine, for example, because they are too young or are very sick.

3. How does a vaccine work?

Vaccines work by preparing the body's immune system to recognize and fight off germs. They reduce your risk of getting a disease by working with your body's natural defenses to build protection. When you get a vaccine, your immune system responds by:

- Detect the invading germ, such as a virus or bacteria.
- Makes antibodies. Antibodies are proteins produced naturally by the immune system to fight disease.
- Remembers the disease and how to fight it. If you are exposed to the germ after getting the vaccine, your immune system can quickly destroy it before you become sick.

Our immune systems are designed to remember. After we get one or more doses of a vaccine, we are protected against the disease for a period of time. This is what makes vaccines so effective. Instead of treating a disease after it happens, vaccines can prevent us from getting sick in the first place.

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4. Can you get COVID-19 from a vaccine?

No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines being developed in the United States have the virus that causes COVID-19 in them. Sometimes people get a fever or feel tired for a day or so after getting a vaccine. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity. You can learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work at this CDC website.

It usually takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. If a person got infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after they got a shot, they could still get COVID-19. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

5. Will getting the vaccine cause me to test positive on a COVID-19 test?

No. Vaccines will not cause you to test positive on a viral test (like the swab test) that looks for current COVID-19 infection. You may test positive on some antibody tests. This is because one of the ways that vaccines work is to teach your body to make antibodies. See the public health testing webpage to learn more about COVID-19 tests.

6. If I have already had COVID-19, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes. You do need the vaccine even if you have had COVID-19. We do not yet know how long you are protected after you have had COVID-19, so it is important to have the vaccine to strengthen your immunity.

7. Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I currently have COVID-19?

No. You cannot get the vaccine if you currently have COVID-19. If you do get COVID-19 between your first and second vaccine, your second shot may be delayed until you have completed your isolation period and symptoms have improved or resolved. Please speak to your provider if this happens to you. Once your symptoms have improved, you can get the vaccine.

In some cases, symptoms of COVID-19 can linger for months. If this applies to you, you should get the vaccine. You do not need to wait for these long-term symptoms to subside.

8. Will I have to pay to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

If you have insurance, we will ask to see your insurance card at the front desk and you will not have to pay. If you do not have insurance, please ask our staff for assistance.

9. What COVID-19 vaccine does Eisner Health offer?

We offer Moderna vaccines for anyone 6 months and older.

10. What Eisner Health locations offer COVID-19 vaccines?

We currently offer COVID-19 vaccinations at all of our locations except Santee Wellness Center.

11. Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have a cold?

Yes. If you have a cold, you should still get your COVID-19 vaccine. If you have a fever, please speak with your doctor first.

12. Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

Yes. Whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you CAN receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant or breastfeeding is safe, effective, and recommended by Eisner Health. For more information, click here.

13. Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am not a legal resident?

Yes. You do not need a social security number or immigration status to get vaccinated for COVID-19. The vaccine is free for everyone, regardless of immigration status. For more information, click here.

14. Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine or booster at Eisner Health if I started the series somewhere else?

Yes, you may continue your series at Eisner Health. Please refer to question #9 for the vaccine types offered.

15. Who should get a third dose?

People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised should get an authorized third dose of a COVID19 vaccine. This includes people who have been receiving cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood, received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system, received a stem cell transplant within the last two years, have moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome), or are receiving treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress the immune response.

These third doses for immunocompromised patients can be given to patients who received their second Pfizer or Moderna dose at least 28 days prior.

16. Who should get a booster shot?

Individuals 18 years of age and older who received a Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for a booster shot six months or more after their initial series.

Individuals who received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, booster shots are also recommended for those who are 18 and older and who were vaccinated two or more months prior. For additional information, click here.

17. Why do I need to wait 15 minutes after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine?

After you receive each of your vaccines, you must wait in our waiting area for 15 minutes for observation to ensure you do not have an allergic reaction to the vaccine. It is very rare to have an allergic reaction. If you have had an allergic reaction to a different vaccine in the past, you can still receive the COVID-19 vaccine, but your observation time may be extended. Please speak to your provider if you have any concerns.

18. Do I have to quarantine if I am exposed to COVID-19 even after I am fully vaccinated?

Please click here for the current recommendations from the California Health Department.

19. Do I need to continue wearing a mask, social distancing, and using other precautions after being fully vaccinated?

Yes. Continuing to wear a mask, social distance, and wash your hands frequently is still recommended because experts don't yet know whether getting a COVID-19 vaccine will prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to other people even if you don't get sick yourself. Experts also need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide in real-world conditions.

20. Can different COVID-19 vaccines be mixed?

Yes. The Federal Drug Administration of the United States allows providers to boost eligible people with a different vaccine than the one they received initially.

Whether you received a Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, or Pfizer vaccine, you may receive a booster of any other vaccine if you meet the criteria listed in question #17.

21. Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine and a flu shot at the same time?

Yes! You can get a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines, including the flu vaccine, during the same visit.

It is likely that the viruses that cause influenza (flu) and COVID-19 will both be spreading this winter. A flu shot only protects you from the flu, but at least it means you will not run the risk of getting flu and COVID-19 at the same time.

Getting a flu vaccine now is more important than ever.