

COVID-19 Vaccine and After You've Been Fully Vaccinated

You received the COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine helps your body boost your immune system to protect you from COVID-19. The vaccine does not give you the COVID-19 virus. If you received a vaccine that requires two doses, it is important that you return to receive the second vaccine as scheduled unless your doctor tells you not to. Based on what we know about COVID-19 vaccines, people who have been fully vaccinated can start to do things that they had stopped doing because of the pandemic. The following guidance affects what fully vaccinated people can do.

Possible side effects

You may or may not experience side effects from the vaccine. If you do experience side effects, it is your body's response to boosting your immune system to protect you. Side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine are more common after receiving the second dose.

The most common side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine are pain, redness or swelling at the injection site, fatigue, fever, headache, and body/muscle aches. These symptoms may affect your daily activities but usually only last one to two days.

These three types of reactions can occur with any type of vaccination:

- Anaphylactic (allergic) reaction: Rarely occurs after COVID-19 vaccination. Most allergic reactions to vaccines occur within minutes up to two hours after getting the injection. Side effects from the vaccine can include:
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Dizziness
 - Face and throat swelling
 - Fast heartbeat
 - Rash all over body
 - Weakness

If you have a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine after you leave the vaccination site, you should seek help right away by calling 911. If this is your first dose of the vaccine, you should not receive the second dose.

- Systemic (whole body) reaction: Most common after second dose of COVID-19 vaccine. These symptoms usually last one-two days after injection:
 - Chills
 - Fatigue
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Joint pain
 - Body/muscle aches
- Localized (near injection site) reaction: Usually lasts one to three days after injection.
 - Lymph node swelling in arm pit
 - Pain, redness or swelling at the injection site

Localized reaction at the injection site

To reduce pain and swelling, apply a cold pack or ice in a wet washcloth to the area for 20 minutes. Repeat in 1 hour. Repeat as needed for the first 48 hours after the injection. You also should use or exercise that arm to reduce pain.

Pain relief

To decrease body/muscle aches, headache, joint pain and/or fever, you can take acetaminophen or ibuprofen as directed on the medication instructions. You should drink plenty of fluids and dress lightly if you have a fever.

It is important to monitor your symptoms after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Call your doctor or CentraCare Connect at 320-200-3200 if your fever lasts more than 3 days, pain at the injection site is not improving, or if you develop any new or worsening symptoms.

COVID symptoms

The following are NOT common side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine: cough, loss of taste or smell, runny nose, shortness of breath and sore throat. These may be symptoms of COVID-19. You should contact your doctor or call CentraCare Connect at 320-200-3200 if these symptoms arise.

Have you been fully vaccinated?

People are considered fully vaccinated:

- Two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, (Pfizer or Moderna vaccines) **or**
- Two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If it has been less than two weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated.

Masks and socially distancing after the vaccine

After you have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you may need to continue to mask and socially distance at times. The vaccine is one of our best defenses against COVID-19 but does not protect us 100% against the virus. Here are some guidelines:

- Continue to follow any federal, state, city, business, and/or workplace rules regarding masking.
- Masking and social distance guidelines still apply in health care facilities, prisons, homeless shelters and while using public transportation (planes, buses, taxis, etc.).
- If you have a health condition or take medicine that may weaken your immune system, you may not be fully protected and may need to continue to mask and socially distance. Please speak with your doctor.
- You should still watch for symptoms of COVID-19, especially if you have been around someone who is sick. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get tested and stay home and away from others.
- Isolate yourself from others if you tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 10 days or if you are having COVID-19 symptoms.
- Continue to follow Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for travel and travel destination rules.

Research is ongoing to determine how the vaccine works against variants of COVID-19, how well the vaccine protects those with a weakened immune system and how long the COVID-19 vaccine protects those vaccinated.

If you have any other questions, please contact CentraCare Connect at 320-200-3200.

Page 2 of 2