

COVID-19 VACCINE F.A.Q.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER GETTING A COVID-19 VACCINE? Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is the best and safest way to become immune to COVID-19. Getting the vaccine will help your immune system build protection against the virus in case you are exposed in the future.

THE COVID-19 VACCINES WERE APPROVED SO QUICKLY. ARE THEY SAFE? Yes! These vaccines have already been given to tens of thousands of volunteers and have been shown to be safe and very good at preventing them from getting sick with COVID-19. They are being rigorously monitored for safety on an ongoing basis.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE? WILL IT MAKE ME SICK? You may have some side effects which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The local side effects are pain, redness and swelling at the injection site. Other reactions are fever, chills, tiredness, headache, body aches and flu-like symptoms. V-Safe is a CDC smartphone-based tool where people can report any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

HOW DO THE PFIZER OR MODERNA VACCINES WORK? These vaccines work by giving your body the recipe to make the protein that is on the outside of the coronavirus. When your body sees that protein, it will make protective antibodies to it. Later, if the body sees the real virus, it will remember seeing that protein and destroy the virus before it has a chance to make you sick.

AFTER RECEIVING THE VACCINE, WHEN WILL I BE IMMUNE FROM COVID-19? We have learned from clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people who took the vaccine that the Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective and the Moderna vaccine is 94.5% at preventing illness from COVID-19 after 14 days from the second dose of vaccine. It is recommended that you get both doses to have the best protection against the virus.

DO I HAVE TO GET BOTH DOSES OF THE PFIZER OR MODERNA VACCINE? The current recommendation is to get both doses to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer. The second dose of COVID-19 vaccine should be from the same product/manufacturer as the first dose.

WILL A COVID-19 VACCINE ALTER MY DNA? No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease.

WILL THE COVID-19 VACCINE INFECT ME WITH THE VIRUS? No. None of the vaccines currently being developed in the United States contain the virus, so there is no possibility of the vaccine infecting someone with COVID-19.

IF I ALREADY HAD COVID-19 AND RECOVERED, DO I STILL NEED TO GET VACCINATED WITH A COVID-19 VACCINE? Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection with COVID-19 is possible, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. You may delay getting the vaccine for 90 days after your diagnosis because getting sick with COVID-19 again is unlikely during that time. If you were treated for COVID-19 symptoms with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

AFTER I RECEIVE THE COVID-19 VACCINE, CAN I STOP WEARING A MASK? No. It will still be important to continue to follow public health recommendations to protect yourself and others. This includes wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds and washing hands often.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Hamilton County Health Department

Website: health.hamiltontn.org

Hotline: For Questions, call 423-209-8383 and speak to a Health Department representative.

Newsletter: health.hamiltontn.org - Click the Connect with Us button to sign up for the newsletter. Be sure and check your email SPAM folder and confirm.

Facebook page: Hamilton County Health Department

Instagram: @hamiltoncotn_health

Twitter: @hamiltonhealth

Free Transportation to the Vaccine Site is based on availability. Schedule an appointment in advance by calling 423-209-8383.