

What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html>

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects **may feel like flu** and **may even affect your ability** to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

Common side effects

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Fever
- Chills
- Delayed-onset local reactions may occur a few days or up to 14 days after the injection and are sometimes quite large. Redness, itching and swelling around the injection site area that may spread down the whole arm are common and are not an allergic reaction or a contraindication to receiving the second dose.
- You may treat the symptoms with whatever makes it feel better (hydrocortisone cream, aloe vera, cold packs, etc) and if you need a second dose, it is advisable to receive it in the opposite arm if possible.

Helpful tips

If you have pain or discomfort, consider taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

To reduce pain and discomfort :

- Take ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
- Use or exercise your arm.

To reduce discomfort from fever:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Dress lightly.



Ask your healthcare provider about getting started with v-safe

Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose

Learn more about **v-safe**.

www.cdc.gov/vsafe

When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If your side effects are worsening or do not seem to be going away after a few days

Remember

- Side effects may feel like flu and even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need 2 shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first one, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.
- It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.



cdc.gov/coronavirus