



COVID-19 Vaccine Myths and Facts (Fall 2023)



MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccine doesn't work. That is why they keep changing it.

FACT: Data shows that COVID-19 vaccines protect people against severe illness and death due to COVID-19. Like the flu vaccine, scientists work to predict what variant of the COVID-19 virus will be circulating this season and tailor the vaccine to those variants, thereby making the vaccine more relevant to the current season.

MYTH: You don't need the updated COVID-19 vaccine if you've already had two shots.

FACT: Scientists learned that the COVID-19 virus can change over time, and the level of protection from older vaccine versions may not be as effective. The best way to protect yourself against severe illness, hospitalization and death is to remain up to date with the recommended COVID-19 vaccine.

MYTH: You don't need the COVID-19 vaccine because the pandemic is over.

FACT: The pandemic period may be over, but COVID-19 is here to stay. People are still getting COVID-19, and people over 65 are at a higher risk of getting seriously ill with the disease, being hospitalized, and dying of it.

MYTH: You can't get a COVID-19 vaccine with your annual flu shot.

FACT: You can safely get several vaccines at the same time. Your provider can recommend the vaccines you need. These may include influenza, RSV, pneumococcal (pneumonia) or COVID-19 vaccine.

MYTH: If you've already had COVID-19, you have natural immunity and don't need the updated vaccine.

FACT: People who already had COVID-19 and do not stay up to date with vaccination after they recover are more likely to get COVID-19 again than those who remain up to date after recovery.

MYTH: I don't want to get the vaccine because it doesn't work. Vaccinated people have still gotten COVID-19.

FACT: COVID-19 vaccination lowers your risk of severe illness and death if you get infected. Compared with people who are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations, unvaccinated people are more likely to get COVID-19, be hospitalized, and die from COVID-19.



MYTH: COVID-19 no longer makes people very sick. It is like a cold, so I don't need the latest vaccine.

FACT: An increase in the number of people vaccinated against COVID-19 has contributed to lowered hospitalization rates and deaths. However, significant numbers of people are dying of COVID-19. Further, nine out of 10 deaths with COVID-19 happen in people older than 65 years of age. The COVID-19 vaccine substantially reduces the risk of severe illness and death.

MYTH: The 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccine ingredients are dangerous.

FACT: Nearly all the ingredients in the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccine are also in many foods – fats, sugars, and salts. They do NOT contain preservatives, tissues (like aborted fetal cells), antibiotics, food proteins, medicines, latex, or metals. There is no change in the basic ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine has been extensively studied in the millions of people who have taken the vaccine in past years.



MYTH: I am a young nurse who works in a nursing home. I do not need the vaccine.

FACT: COVID-19 is still dangerous for many residents, especially those with chronic medical conditions like diabetes, heart disease and lung disease. By remaining up to date with COVID-19 vaccination, you will help protect the residents you care for. Research on respiratory viral illness has shown that having highly vaccinated staff can decrease the poor outcomes of respiratory infections among nursing home residents.

People who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 and become infected have a higher risk of developing Long COVID compared to those who have been vaccinated. Long COVID includes a wide range of ongoing health problems, including tiredness that interferes with daily life, headaches, dizziness, muscle and joint pains, difficulty breathing, chest pain, fast heartbeat, difficulty thinking, sleep problems, or changes in smell or taste. These conditions can last weeks, months or years.

MYTH: I am planning to have children, and I have heard that COVID-19 Vaccination can decrease my chance of getting pregnant.

FACT: There is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

In fact, COVID-19 can make you very sick during pregnancy. Additionally, if you have COVID-19 during pregnancy, you are at [increased risk of complications](#) that can affect your pregnancy and developing baby.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html>

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<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/overview-COVID-19-vaccines.html>

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