



JACKSON HEALTH SYSTEM IS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE FIRST FLORIDA HOSPITALS SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE COVID-19 VACCINE.

Currently, Jackson is providing the COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by Pfizer. The following frequently asked questions, or FAQ's, are intended to help answer some common questions you may have about COVID-19 vaccines. Regular updates will be made to this document as more information becomes available.

Why should I get vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated is one of many steps you can take to protect yourself from COVID-19. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Protection from COVID-19 is critically important because for some people, it can cause severe illness or death. Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available. Other steps, like wearing face masks, hand washing, and physical distancing, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine, combined with following recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will offer the best protection against COVID-19.

Do I need to contact my primary care doctor before getting the vaccine?

Yes. You should speak with your doctor first about whether the COVID-19 vaccine is safe for you.

How many shots of the COVID-19 vaccine are required?

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine require two doses. The two doses of the Pfizer vaccine are administered 21 days apart, while the second dose of the Moderna vaccine is administered 28 days after the first shot. It takes approximately two weeks to develop antibodies after completing both doses of the vaccine.

What are the side effects?

Possible short-term side effects of the vaccine include pain at the injection site, as well as fatigue, chills, and fever.

How effective are the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines? Are they safe?

Studies have shown these vaccines are about 95 percent effective. With regard to the safety of the vaccines, no serious safety concerns have been reported.

If I get this vaccine, will I be injected with the virus?

No. Unlike traditional vaccines, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are mRNA vaccines — or messenger RNA vaccines — that do not contain live virus. According to the CDC, mRNA vaccines contain material from the virus that gives our cells instructions for how to make a harmless protein that is unique to the virus. After our cells make copies of the protein, they destroy the genetic material from the vaccine. Our bodies recognize that the protein should not be there and build T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes that will remember how to fight the virus that causes COVID-19 if we are infected in the future.



Will I need to continue wearing a mask, social distancing, and hand washing after I am vaccinated?

Yes. The CDC still recommends that during the pandemic people wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth when in contact with others outside your household, and in any public places. Social distancing is also recommended, in part because vaccine doses will be limited and it will take time to immunize enough of the population to stop the spread. Regular hand washing with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer is another tool to prevent transmission of the virus.

Should I still get vaccinated if I already had COVID-19?

Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection with COVID-19 is possible, you may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you have been sick with COVID-19 before. We are still learning how long immunity to the virus lasts after an infection or a vaccination. Typically, an infection causes better immunity than a vaccine, but not always. Further guidance from the CDC and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is pending.

Can I get my second vaccine dose if I test positive for COVID-19 after receiving my first vaccine?

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 since receiving your first dose, you should still receive your second dose. You must wait to receive your second dose until 10 days after your positive COVID test, and you must also be symptom-free for at least 24 hours. Transplant recipients and other immunocompromised patients should wait at least 20 days, and patients who have received plasma or monoclonal antibody treatment should wait 90 days. The CDC has advised that you can safely and effectively receive the second dose later than the 21st day in order to follow this guidance.

Are pregnant or immunocompromised individuals eligible for the vaccine?

No data is available at this time on the safety or efficacy of the vaccines for these populations.

If I have an auto-immune or chronic medical condition, should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Given the complexity and the multitude of conditions, we advise anyone with a chronic medical condition and/or a condition that affects your immune system to seek the opinion of your physician and/or a subject matter expert who can support you in this decision.

How long is the vaccine good for and how often do you have to get vaccinated? Is it yearly like the flu shot or once like MMR?

As there haven't been long-term studies of these brand-new vaccines, we don't know the answer to this question for certain.

Do we know the guidelines for COVID-19 vaccination in children?

The preliminary guidance is that the current vaccines that have received emergency approval are NOT approved for use in children.

How long does it take the COVID-19 vaccine to work?

COVID-19 antibodies appear approximately 14 days after the second dose.