



This running FAQ document will be updated each Wednesday.

Latest update: July 23, 2021

- **Language updates in green font**
- **New questions in red font**

## General COVID-19 Vaccine Questions

### ***Who can receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?***

All Tennesseans age 12 and over are eligible for vaccination. Those who are 12 to 17 must receive the Pfizer vaccine, so check VaccineFinder for vaccinating facilities providing the Pfizer vaccine. To find a vaccinating facility, which vaccine they provide, hours of operation, and register for an appointment, follow one of these links.

1. **Register for a Vaccination Appointment at your local county health department:** All Tennesseans can register online at <https://vaccinate.tn.gov/> for an appointment.
2. **To locate all vaccinating facilities and register for an appointment:** Visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/> to locate a facility vaccinating.

Some locations are offering walk-in vaccination, please check with your preferred provider to determine if this is the case.

### ***What can I do to prevent getting COVID-19 until I can get the vaccine?***

Practice social distancing, wear a mask when around others, wash your hands, avoid being around others who are sick, avoid crowds, and avoid poorly ventilated spaces. For more information about protecting yourself and others visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/).

### ***What can I do if I need transportation to receive my vaccine?***

Tennessee seniors who need transportation assistance to receive COVID-19 vaccination may learn about services offered by the Tennessee Association of Human Resource Agencies at <https://tnhra.org/services/transportation/>.

### ***Why should I consider getting a COVID-19 vaccine?***

Since there is no way to know for certain how COVID-19 will affect you—

- you might have a mild case or you could have serious, life-threatening complications.
- you could also risk giving COVID-19 virus to your family who could get very sick or even

die from the COVID-19 infection.

After receiving the vaccine, you may be uncomfortable for a few days, but this is the best and safest way to build immunity to COVID-19. In the United States over 578,000 people have died due to COVID-19 and we are still experiencing deaths due to COVID-19.

Once you are fully vaccinated  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine,

- you can visit other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or social distancing.
- you can visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing

Another benefit of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is that you are no longer subject to quarantine or testing following a known exposure as long as you are symptom-free.

***How effective are COVID vaccines are against variants of the virus that causes COVID-19.***

According to the CDC, current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines used in the U.S. should work against these COVID virus variants. But more studies are being done to confirm how well each vaccine works against each virus variant.

***Is there a charge to receive the COVID-19 vaccine? What if I don't have insurance?***

Tennesseans will receive the vaccine at no cost. However, your vaccination provider may submit charges to your insurance provider for administration fees. If you do not have insurance, there are other options for your vaccination provider to recover the administration fees from the [Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund](#).

***If I tested positive for COVID-19 in the past, do I need to get the COVID-19 vaccine?***

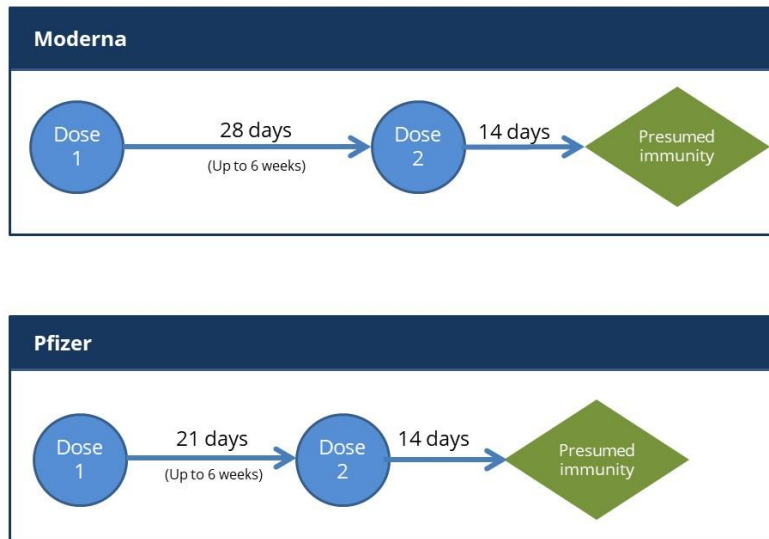
Yes, you should be vaccinated. Data from clinical trials indicate that COVID-19 vaccines are safe in persons recovered from COVID-19.

***Since the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine is only a one dose vaccine, is it still effective against COVID19***

In making its decision to authorize the one-dose Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the FDA evaluated scientific evidence indicating the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine was 85 percent effective in preventing severe COVID-19, and protected individuals against hospitalization and death 28 days after they received the vaccine. See the [FDA's Frequently Asked Questions](#) and [Letter of Emergency Use Authorization](#) on the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

***If the vaccine is a two-dose vaccine, how will I know when to get the second dose?***

When you receive the vaccine, you will receive a card with the date of your first dose, the name/manufacturer of the vaccine received and the date on which you should receive your second dose. Your second dose of COVID-19 vaccine must be from the same product name/manufacturer as the first dose. We recommend when you receive your card, take a picture as a back-up, add the date to your calendar, and download the V-safe app. The V-safe app can remind you when it's time to receive your second dose.



***If I cannot receive the 2nd dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at the correct time, how many days after can the dose be given?***

The second dose should occur as close as possible to 21 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna, but could be administered up to 6 weeks from the first dose.

***How long do I have to wait between receiving the flu vaccine (pneumonia or shingles or any other vaccine) and the COVID-19 vaccine?***

COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines may now be administered without regard to timing. This includes simultaneous administration of COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines on the same day, as well as co-administration within 14 days.

***After I receive the COVID-19 vaccine, do I need to continue wearing a face mask and follow social distancing guidelines?***

To protect those who may be at high risk of developing complications if infected with COVID-19, you should continue to wear a face mask and follow social distancing guidelines while in a public setting, Gathering with unvaccinated people from more than one other household, or when visiting with an unvaccinated person who is at increased risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19 or who lives with a person at increased risk. Regardless of your vaccination status, you will still need to follow the health and safety guidance at your workplace.

Guidance on mask-wearing and social distancing is evolving as scientists learn more about how the COVID-19 vaccine builds immunity. If you are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine),

- you can visit other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or social distancing.
- you can visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing

Another benefit of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is that you are no longer subject to quarantine or testing following a known exposure as long as you are symptom-free.

### ***Do I need to quarantine after exposure to a case even after I've been fully vaccinated?***

Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-like symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, as their risk of infection is low.

Fully vaccinated people who do not quarantine should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated, and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html#anchor\\_1615143411738](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html#anchor_1615143411738)

### ***Has the quarantine guidance changed for unvaccinated individuals?***

Unvaccinated Persons do not have to quarantine in ***low risk situations***\* if they meet ***all the following criteria***:

- Tested antibody positive within 3 months before or immediately following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure

Note: all social gatherings, schooling, and most out-of-home vocational activities are deemed greater than low risk due to the potential for contact with persons with high-risk medical conditions. To be socially responsible, double-check with the people in your presence to make sure they are not high risk.

***\*Low risk situations*** include settings where contact with persons at high risk of COVID-19 severe illness, including ***older adults*** and ***persons with certain medical conditions***, is not anticipated for at least ***10 days following exposure***. Contacts to COVID-19 should still monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 during the 14 days after exposure and if symptoms of COVID-19, develop they should isolate and seek testing.

### ***If I get symptoms shortly after I've been vaccinated, should I get tested?***

If you have symptoms shortly after receiving the vaccine, these symptoms do not mean you have developed COVID-19 from the vaccine. 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. For more information about symptoms after receiving the vaccine you can view the CDC's [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine fact sheet](#).

***I have heard the Pfizer vaccine is not recommended for children under the age of 12 and the Moderna and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccines are not recommended for children under the age of 18. Will children have the option to be vaccinated?***

A clear timeframe is not known at this time for when children under 12 will be recommended to get the vaccine. At this time, children 12 and over can receive the Pfizer vaccine, and individuals 18+ can receive the Moderna or Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

***If my child is 12 or 17 years of age, what vaccine can they receive?***

Individuals aged 12 to age 17 can receive the Pfizer vaccine. The Moderna and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccines are not approved for anyone under the age of 18. The Pfizer vaccine is a two-dose vaccine, and it's important to receive the second dose for maximum protection against the COVID-19 virus. For a list of locations vaccinating with the Pfizer vaccine, visit the <https://www.vaccines.gov/> webpage. Under 'VACCINES' click the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID Vaccine, add your zip code and click search.

***I received my first dose in another state and now I am back in Tennessee, can I receive my second dose in Tennessee?***

Yes, you will need to make an appointment for your second dose through your [local health department](#) or VaccineFinder.org. It is also important that the second dose is the same type/manufacturer as you received the first time. Bring your vaccination card with you to your appointment for the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose.

***What if I don't have my card or proof of my first dose?***

COVID-19 vaccine providers that are approved by the Tennessee Department of Health are required to report administered doses into Tennessee's Immunization Registry, TennIIS. Vaccine administrators can check TennIIS for the date and manufacturer of the vaccine received for the first dose.

***I lost my COVID-19 Immunization card. How do I get a replacement?***

Tennessee is able to send a record of an individual's entire vaccination history but is not able to send replacement cards. To request a copy of your COVID-19 Immunization history fill out this form <https://redcap.link/recordrequest>. Note that replacement vaccine cards are not issued by this office. The record we provide is a complete list of all vaccinations reported to TennIIS for

you. Any vaccinations that have not been reported to TennIIS will not be listed on the record.

***Was the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine developed using “fetal tissue”?***

Tissues are groups of organized cells. Tissues are not used to make vaccines. Fetal tissue was not used to make Janssen/Johnson & Johnson, nor any other, COVID-19 vaccine. In developing its vaccine, Janssen/Johnson & Johnson used a fetal cell line, which no longer contains the original donor cells, to grow a harmless virus, which causes some of the body's cells to make a protein that causes the immune response.

## **Vaccine Safety and How it Works**

***Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?***

Yes! These vaccines have already been given to millions of people and have been shown to be safe and very good at preventing them from getting sick with COVID-19. The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. The vaccine will continue to be monitored to make sure any rare problems are found as soon as possible and studied to see if they were caused by the vaccine.

***Will the COVID-19 vaccines cause allergic reactions?***

COVID-19 vaccine. Do not administer the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine to individuals with a known history of a severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine or any component of the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. As a change from previous versions of the guidance, known polysorbate allergy is no longer a contraindication to mRNA vaccination; however, known polysorbate allergy is a contraindication to Janssen COVID-19 vaccine and thus, a precaution to mRNA COVID-19 vaccination.

While these reactions are being studied, it is advised that people with a history of severe allergic reactions to injected or infused medications be observed for a minimum of 30 minutes after receiving the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. People with allergies to food, animals, venom, environmental dusts or pollens, polyethylene glycol (PEG), polysorbate or oral medications have not been shown to have an increased risk of reaction to the COVID-19 vaccines.

***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 the COVID-19. Some people who receive the vaccine will develop arm soreness or redness, fever, headache, chills, and fatigue as their immune system responds. These symptoms typically go away after a day or two.

***How does the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine 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. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html>

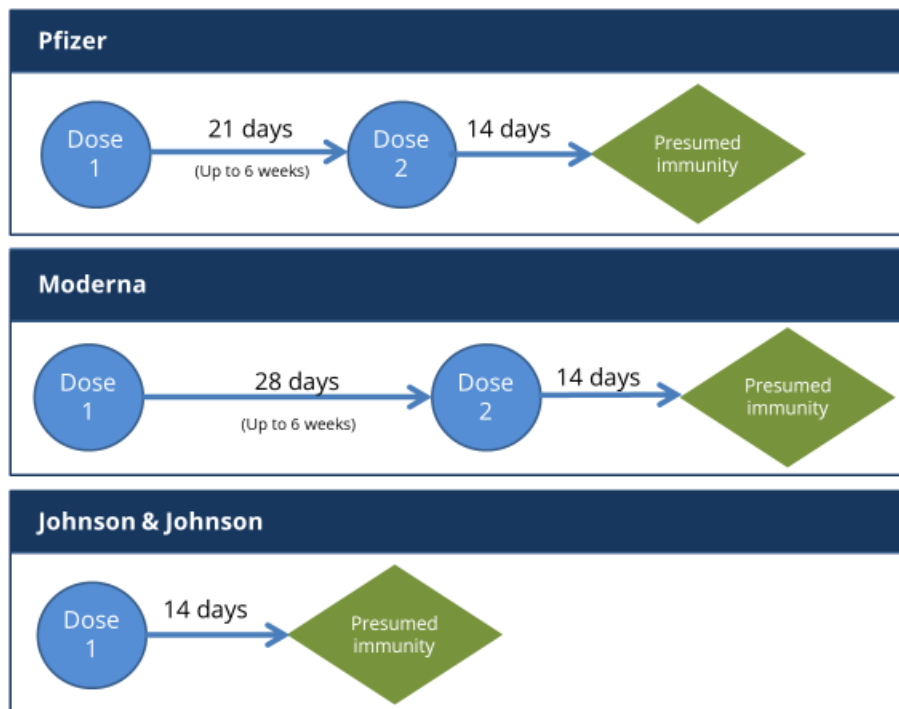
### **How does the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine work?**

The Janssen/Johnson & Johnson uses an established approach of employing a harmless cold virus to deliver a gene that carries the blueprint for the protein found on the surface of the coronavirus. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/janssen.html>

### **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

- The Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective at preventing illness from COVID-19 after 14 days from the second dose of the vaccine. You must get both doses to have the best protection against the virus.
- The Moderna vaccine is 94.5% effective at preventing illness from COVID-19 after 14 days from the second dose of vaccine. You must get both doses to have the best protection against the virus.
- The Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine is 85% effective in preventing severe disease and demonstrated **complete protection against COVID-19 related hospitalization and death** after 14 days from receiving the vaccine. This is a single dose vaccine.



***If I get sick with COVID-19 after the first dose of the vaccine but before getting the second dose of the vaccine, what do I do about the second dose?***

You should still plan to receive the second dose after you recover from your COVID-19 illness *and* after you finish your isolation period for COVID-19 infection (for most people, this will be 10 days after symptoms started or positive COVID-19 test, and no fever for 24 hours). Note that the second dose of vaccine should still be no sooner than the recommended waiting period for the second dose (21 days for the Pfizer vaccine, 28 days for the Moderna vaccine).

***I received my first dose of the COVID19 Vaccine and a few days later was diagnosed with COVID19. I was treated with COVID Plasma Treatment. Should I wait to receive my second vaccine dose or do I need to restart the series?***

If you have received monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma for COVID, you do not need to restart the vaccine series. Wait 90 days from the date of the infusion before receiving the second dose.

***If I test positive after getting a COVID-19 vaccine, do I have COVID-19?***

None of the COVID-19 vaccines available in the US can cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection. Additionally, the first dose of vaccine only gives a partial amount of protection, so if you test positive by PCR after receiving the vaccine, it is likely a true positive. You should isolate for 10 days, inform your close contacts to quarantine, and seek medical care as needed.

***Can you direct me to helpful information about the COVID vaccines?***

The CDC has very helpful information on the vaccines available [here](#).

## **Questions about Vaccine Phases**

***I keep hearing about Tennessee metropolitan counties (Metros). What counties are considered metropolitan counties?***

Metropolitan counties are independent from the state plan, and these counties may have different instructions, so residents in these areas should check with local authorities about their plans. These counties include ***Shelby, Madison, Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, and Sullivan***.

***Who decides the Phases and how the vaccine is distributed?***

The TN Department of Health, in partnership with the State Government and the TN COVID-19 Pandemic Vaccine Stakeholder Group, has developed a vaccination plan based upon the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine and the CDC's Playbook for Jurisdictions. You can read Tennessee's Vaccination Plan and find more information about COVID-19 vaccines [here](#).



***Is there a plan for vaccinating people who are homebound?***

Yes, Tennessee Department of Health and Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability) is working with home health agencies to reach these groups. For more information contact [tabitha.satterfield@tn.gov](mailto:tabitha.satterfield@tn.gov)

***How is the state making sure the minority population is being vaccinated?***

The Tennessee Department of Health is partnering with faith-based and community organizations, academic institutions, and federally qualified health centers and other hospital systems to provide vaccinations to minority populations and underserved communities across the state. Through these partnerships, we have combined our efforts to develop lists of individuals and schedule appointments for them to receive the vaccination in their respective county. We are working to eliminate transportation barriers for those without transportation. In addition, we have been facilitating virtual sessions to work individuals through tools available on the COVID-19 microsite ([covid19.tn.gov](http://covid19.tn.gov)) online appointments and registering for the vaccine waitlist. If you know of a church that is interested in partnering with us to provide the vaccine to minority populations, please contact us at [Minority.Health@tn.gov](mailto:Minority.Health@tn.gov).

**Questions about Where / How to Get the Vaccine**

***How do I register to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?***

All Tennesseans age 12 and over are eligible for vaccination. Those who are 12 to 17 must receive the Pfizer vaccine, so check VaccineFinder for vaccinating facilities providing the Pfizer vaccine. To find a vaccinating facility, which vaccine they provide, and register for an appointment, follow one of these links.

3. **Register for a Vaccination Appointment:** All Tennesseans can register online at <https://vaccinate.tn.gov/> for an appointment time to receive a vaccination through your local county health department.
4. **To locate a vaccinating facility and register:** COVID-19 Vaccines are limited, and most locations require appointments for vaccination. Visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/> to locate a facility vaccinating in your county.

***Can anyone receive the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine or is it for a specific population?***

The Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine is recommended for people aged 18 years and older. All Tennesseans have a choice in what vaccine they receive. Visit [VaccineFinder.org](http://VaccineFinder.org) to find out which vaccine is available at providers in your area.

***I heard that hospitals, pharmacies, and health departments are vaccinating the public if they have unused doses at the end of the day, can we show up at the facility to receive the vaccine?***

Appointments are required at most locations, so before showing up at a facility visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>, search by zip code, and click a location with vaccine "In stock" to view the next steps and hours of operation. Some locations are offering walk-in vaccination, please

check with your preferred provider to determine if this is the case.

***Are Community Pharmacies taking appointments or walk-ins? How do we know which pharmacies are vaccinating?***

Appointments are required at most locations, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/> to locate a pharmacy in your community search by zip code, and click a location with vaccine "In stock" to view the next steps. Some locations are offering walk-in vaccination, please check with your preferred provider to determine if this is the case.

***When I received my first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, I did not have an option to schedule my second vaccination. How can I schedule my second vaccine? How will I know when to come for my second dose?***

When you receive the vaccine, you will receive a card with the date of your first dose, the name/manufacturer of the vaccine received and the date you should receive your second dose. People who receive their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine at a county health department will be instructed by the health department as to how to schedule a second dose of vaccine. The health department will send out communication stating you are due for your second dose and when that location will be open / available for second doses. Many of the health departments have moved to online registration and there will be the ability to register specifically for a second dose. You should plan to return to the same location where your first vaccine was given to ensure you receive the same manufacturer of vaccine for the second dose.

***I received my first COVID-19 Vaccine at a temporary Point of Distribution (POD) in our county. For my second dose, will our health department open another POD in our county?***

Each county is operating differently, but when you schedule your second appointment, they will give you a location for the POD in your county.

***After I receive the COVID-19 vaccine through a health department or other facility, will my primary care provider be notified?***

Patients are responsible for reporting to their primary care provider that they have received the vaccine. Vaccines are reported in TennIIS, and anyone who has access to TennIIS can check.

## **Questions about Pregnant and Breastfeeding Populations**

***If I am pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, where can I find more information to help me make an informed decision?***

A conversation between you and your healthcare provider may help with the decision about taking the vaccine. Pregnant? [Here's What You Should Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine](#) is another resource that can help you make an informed decision.

### ***Should I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant?***

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), pregnant people are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people based on what we know now. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 might be at increased risk for other adverse outcomes, such as preterm birth. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. However, data are limited about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant. At this time, ACIP recommends that certain groups (e.g., healthcare personnel, followed by other frontline essential workers) are offered vaccination with people who are pregnant and part of a group can choose to be vaccinated. A conversation between you and your healthcare provider may help with the decision about taking the vaccine.

### ***Should I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I am planning to get pregnant?***

There is no recommendation for pregnancy testing before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Those who are trying to become pregnant do not need to avoid pregnancy after a COVID-19 vaccination.

### ***Should I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I am breastfeeding?***

There are no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in breastfeeding people or the effects of COVID-19 vaccines on breastfed infants. COVID-19 vaccines are not thought to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant. A lactating person who is part of a group recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine (e.g., healthcare personnel) may choose to be vaccinated. A conversation between you and your healthcare provider may help with the decision about taking the vaccine.

## **Monitoring Side Effects after Vaccine**

### ***I heard there is a monitoring program for COVID-19 vaccines? How can I participate in this program?***

It's called V-safe, and it's a smart-phone based monitoring program. It uses text messaging and web surveys to check-in with vaccine recipients after vaccination. Participants would report side effects and health impact events after the COVID-19 vaccination. Depending on your answer, someone from CDC may call to check on you and gather more information. V-safe will also remind you when it's time to receive your second dose if one is needed. Before receiving the vaccine, you will receive an information sheet from your healthcare provider with v-safe information and a link to register.

## **General Questions**

### ***Does the plan guard against new variants?***

Current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States offer protection against the circulating variants. CDC will continue to monitor variants to see if they have any impact on prevention strategies and how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions and will update guidance accordingly.

***Where do I find the level of community transmission in my community?***

Level of community transmission is defined as total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate 10-49; substantial, 50-99, high,  $\geq 100$ ) and percentage of positive tests in the past 7 days (low,  $< 5\%$ ; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high,  $\geq 10\%$ ). Community is defined as the county the school is located in. Data for Tennessee counties can be found under the community transmission dropdown box at [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#). Additional data can be found [here](#).

***Where do I find vaccine coverage rates and what is considered high and low vaccination rates?***

Vaccine coverage rates can be found under the community transmission dropdown box at [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#). Nationwide data can be found [COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review | CDC](#). Whilst imperfect, low vaccination rates are any county rate below the Tennessee state fully vaccinated rate and a high vaccination rate is any county rate above the national United States fully vaccinated rate.

***Where can I find information about national back-to-school guidance?***

Guidance from the CDC for K-12 schools, including masking in classrooms and on transport, can be found at [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools | CDC](#)