



FAQs for the General Public

This information is current as of **12/21/2020**.
As more information is released, more details will be added.

Q1: Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

A: At this time, there are two vaccines for COVID-19 in the United States. One is manufactured by Pfizer and BioNTech; and the other is manufactured by Moderna. Each need two doses from the same manufacturer. The vaccine provider will give individuals information at the time of immunization.

Q2: Is the COVID-19 vaccine approved?

A: Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under an emergency use authorization (EUA) after multiple levels of studies showing its safety and effectiveness. This EUA approval ensures the vaccine can get to the American people as quickly as possible.

Q3: Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Due to limited vaccine supply, the COVID-19 vaccine is currently not available to the general public. It is expected that there will be enough vaccine for everyone who wants it by late spring or early summer 2021. There is currently no list to sign up to receive the vaccine.

Q4: What is the vaccine plan for the residents of Sedgwick County?

A: The County has been planning for a COVID-19 vaccine since May. Plans include a providing vaccine at a special county-run site, as well as smaller pop-up mobile clinics. Additionally, other clinics and businesses such as doctors' offices and pharmacies will be able to provide the vaccine.

Q5: How is the County deciding where vaccine goes?

A: The County follows guidance from federal and state government.

Q6: How much does a COVID-19 vaccination cost?

A: Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. However, vaccination providers can choose to charge an administration fee for giving a shot to someone. Vaccine providers can get this fee reimbursed by your insurance company or, if you are uninsured, through the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

Q7: How many doses are needed and why?

A: Nearly all COVID-19 vaccines being studied in the United States require two shots. The first shot primes the immune system, helping it recognize the virus, and the second shot strengthens the immune response. Two shots will provide the best protection against COVID-19. Studies show more than 90% effectiveness of the vaccine.

Q8: How many days, weeks, or months between vaccine doses?

A: The doses can range between 21 days and 28 days, depending on which vaccine you receive.



Q9: Can children get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: The safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccine has not been extensively studied in children. Because of this, it is not recommended that anyone under 16 receive the vaccine at this time. Trials are currently underway to test vaccine safety and efficacy in children.

Q10: Can pregnant women get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: The manufacturer recommends that anyone who is pregnant, or thinks they may be pregnant, consult their medical provider before taking the vaccine.

Q11: Can older adults get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Yes, older adults can receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to them.

Q12: What are the side effects of the vaccine?

A: Currently, no unanticipated side effects have been reported from the Pfizer vaccine usage. The side effects are very similar to other commonly received vaccines, including redness, swelling and pain at the injection site; tiredness; headache; joint and muscle pain; fever; swollen lymph nodes; feeling unwell; and nausea (feeling like you are going to throw up).

Due to the nature of the vaccine the manufacturer also advises that there may be other side effects that may not be listed.

Q13: Could the vaccine cause an allergic reaction?

There is a small chance that the vaccine could cause a severe allergic reaction. In the case of these symptoms seek medical attention immediately by either contacting 911 or going to an emergency department. Side effects of a severe allergic reaction include difficulty breathing; swelling of your face and throat; a fast heartbeat; a bad rash all over your body; or dizziness and weakness.

Q14: What should I do if I have a vaccine side effect?

If you experience a side effect or allergic reaction let your medical provider and your vaccine provider know. If severe, seek medical attention by either contacting 911 or going to an emergency department.

Q15: Can the COVID-19 vaccine cause infertility?

A: There is no evidence to suggest that the COVID-19 vaccine can cause infertility. People who are pregnant or think they may be pregnant should consult their medical provider before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Q16: If I get vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask and socially distance?

A: Yes. Wearing a mask and practicing social distancing is still the best way to reduce your risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. It is a tool in our toolkit to reduce the spread of the virus. Until enough people in the U.S. get the vaccine, we will have to

Q17: If I get vaccinated, can I still get COVID and infect others?

A: Possibly. The vaccines are new and studies so far show 94-95% effectiveness. There is a chance that some vaccinated people may still get infected, and be able to spread, the virus. Wearing a mask and practicing social distancing is still the best way to reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. It a tool in our toolkit to reduce the spread of the virus.

Q18: Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

A: No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use or in development in the United States use the live virus that causes COVID-19. However, it typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick.



Q19: If I have previously had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

A: Yes. CDC recommends that you get vaccinated even if you have already had COVID-19 because you can get infected again. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, experts don't know how long this protection will last.

Q20: Is it better to get natural immunity to COVID-19 (by getting sick and getting better) or getting my immunity from the vaccine?

A: We don't know how long protection lasts for those who get infected or those who are vaccinated. However, we do know that COVID-19 can cause very serious illness for many people. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is the safer choice.

Q21: I heard that some COVID-19 vaccines alter your DNA. Is this true?

A: No. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use a new and well-researched technology called mRNA. mRNA stands for messenger ribonucleic acid. The mRNA in the vaccines teach the body's cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The immune response produces antibodies which is what protects us from getting infected. mRNA does not alter or modify a person's genetic makeup (DNA). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html>

Q22: Do I have to miss work after getting the vaccine?

A: No. At this time, there is no recommendation on missing work after a vaccine.

Q23: Can my employer mandate that I receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Yes, your employer can require that you receive a COVID-19 vaccine in order to remain working.

Q24: Can my child's school mandate that my child receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

A: At this time, no federal or state recommendations have been issued on whether or not COVID-19 vaccine should be required for children to attend school.

Q25: My medical facility is interested in becoming a provider of COVID-19 vaccine. Where can I sign up or find more information?

A: For more information about becoming a COVID-19 vaccination provider, please email kdhe.COVIDenrollment@ks.gov.

Q26: I am a medical professional able to give an intramuscular injection. Where can I sign up to volunteer?

A: SCHD houses a volunteer organization called Sedgwick County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). For more information and to apply, please visit: <https://www.sedgwickcounty.org/health/medical-reserve-corps/>

Q27: Can I still volunteer with the Health Department even if I am not a medical professional?

A: Yes. Sedgwick County MRC accepts both medical and non-medical volunteers. Please visit : <https://www.sedgwickcounty.org/health/medical-reserve-corps/>

Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine here:

Sedgwick County Health Department's Vaccine Page
<https://www.sedgwickcounty.org/covid-19/vaccine-information/>

Kansas Department of Health and Environment
<https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/284/COVID-19-Vaccine>

CDC's FAQ about COVID-19 Vaccination
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center
COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>

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