

COVID-19 Vaccine

Southern Ohio
Medical Center

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Very Good things are happening here

Southern Ohio Medical Center has prepared the following list of questions and answers to keep you informed about what you can expect as you prepare for your COVID-19 vaccination:

Why is getting the COVID-19 vaccine important in fighting this virus?

Stopping a pandemic requires using **all** the tools available. Vaccines work with your immune system, so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other precautions, like wearing a mask and eye protection, washing your hands, and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. The extent to which we can safely do the sorts of things we all enjoy as part of life depends on our **personal responsibility**, which includes taking the COVID-19 vaccine.

When will the first COVID-19 vaccines be available at SOMC for community members?

SOMC could begin offering the COVID-19 vaccine to eligible members of the community as early as the week of January 18, 2021. The amount of vaccine supply we receive is expected to be *very limited*, and the guidelines SOMC will use for prioritizing vaccine distribution will be determined by the State of Ohio. SOMC is not the only provider offering the COVID-19 vaccine. The Ohio Department of Health will soon have a link that will direct you to other vaccination sites.

How will SOMC prioritize who receives the vaccine as it is available?

Southern Ohio Medical Center will follow the guidance provided by the State of Ohio to prioritize groups for vaccinations as supply will be limited. This prioritization updates regularly and can be accessed on the Ohio Department of Health's website at the following link: [Ohio COVID 19 Vaccination Program](#). Please check our website homepage (www.somc.org) for up-to-date information about the priority group we are accepting for vaccination appointments.

How will I schedule my vaccine when it is available?

Eligible community members can call our **SOMC Care Line at (740) 356-CARE (2273)** to schedule their vaccination appointment. The Care Line hours are 8:00am – 8:00pm seven (7) days per week.

Where will I go to get my COVID-19 vaccine when available?

SOMC will be administering the COVID-19 vaccine at our Main Campus (1805 27th Street) in our Vaccine Clinic within our Main Lobby. Vaccines will be offered by appointment only. For your convenience, free valet services will be available when you arrive for your vaccine to assist you with parking if needed.

How does the COVID-19 vaccine work?

The COVID-19 vaccine is a type of vaccine using mRNA (messenger mRNA) to protect against infectious diseases. Many vaccines put a weakened or inactivated germ into our bodies to trigger an immune response, but **not mRNA vaccines**. Instead, mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies. mRNA vaccines, like the COVID-19 vaccine, **do not use the live virus** that causes COVID-19.

How many shots of the COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?

The COVID-19 vaccine will require individuals to receive two injections. The length of time between injections will vary depending on which vaccine manufacturer is used for the injection.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

Yes. Like medicines, vaccines go through a rigorous research, development, and approval process before they are made available to the public. Vaccines are tested in a three-phase clinical trial process to show that the product is safe and effective before it is approved. Both COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers that SOMC may receive (Moderna and Pfizer) have completed the rigorous three phases of clinical trials and have been approved by the FDA for safe use, with >94% effectiveness.

What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Most COVID-19 vaccine side effects are mild, lasting 72 hours or less, and similar to those experienced with other vaccines: soreness at the site of injection, low-grade fever, achiness, headache and fatigue. These **side effects mean that the immune system is doing its job**, taking notice of the vaccine and ultimately producing antibodies. Long-term effects are not thought to be likely given this vaccine type (mRNA) just generates a protein to which our bodies create an immune response. For more information, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) resources: [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

What do I do if I have a side effect reaction once I get home?

After COVID-19 vaccination, certain types of reactions should be expected (as described above). Reactions can also include vomiting and diarrhea, as well as redness or swelling at the injection site, and swollen lymph glands near the arm that was injected. These reactions typically begin 1-3 days after vaccination and most often after dose #2. Symptoms **not expected** after vaccination include hives, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,

sore throat, loss of taste or smell. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider for symptoms **not expected** after COVID-19 vaccination. For more information, please refer to the CDC resources: [What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

Will I have to pay for the COVID-19 vaccine?

No. SOMC will offer the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to all community members.

Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others after receiving two doses of the vaccine?

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be essential to continue wearing your mask and eye protection, washing your hands, and staying at least 6 feet away from others.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, should I still get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to persons regardless of their COVID-19 infection history.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I have to wait a certain period of time before I get my COVID-19 vaccine?

No. As long as you are out of your “active” COVID-19 infection period, you are safe to receive your vaccination.

If I have received monoclonal antibody or convalescent plasma treatment for COVID-19, do I have to wait a certain period of time before I get my COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. It is recommended that you wait at least 90 days from your last treatment date to receive your COVID-19 vaccination. This will avoid interference between your treatment and the vaccine-induced immune response of the COVID-19 vaccine.

If I am immunocompromised, should I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

People who have immunocompromising conditions, or who take immunosuppressive medications or therapies, may be at increased risk for severe COVID-19. While data is not currently available regarding the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine for these groups, these individuals may still receive the COVID-19 vaccine unless otherwise contraindicated. Please consult with your medical provider about your specific condition and whether the COVID-19 vaccine is right for you.

If I am pregnant, should I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

For most people, getting the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible is the safest choice. While the risks of receiving an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy are thought to be small, they are not totally known as pregnant women were not included in the clinical trials. You should consider your own personal risk of getting COVID-19. If your personal risk is high, or there are many cases of COVID-19 in your community, it probably makes sense for you to get the vaccine while you are pregnant. Whether or not to get a COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy is your choice. Consult with your doctor or your OB/GYN provider for any questions you may have as you make your decision.

If I am breastfeeding, is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

The *American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)* and the *Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine* recommend that COVID-19 vaccines be offered to lactating individuals when they meet the criteria for receiving the vaccine. There is no reason to believe that the vaccine affects the safety of breast milk, as mRNA is fragile and it is unlikely that any part of the vaccine gets into the breast milk. The vaccine does not contain the virus, and there is no risk of infecting your baby through breast milk.

When can I stop wearing a mask and avoiding close contact with others after I have been vaccinated?

There is not enough information currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people wear masks and avoid close contact with others to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before making that decision. Other factors, including how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities, will also affect this decision.

How long will the immunity I receive from a COVID-19 vaccine last?

Today, it is uncertain how long immunity lasts until we have a vaccine widely available and more data on how well it works. This data will likely be available in the Summer or Fall of 2021.

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To learn more visit [CDC Covid Vaccination](#).

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