



## Our Mission

The Department of Correction shall strive to be a global leader in progressive correctional practices and partnered re-entry initiatives to support responsive evidence-based practices aligned to law-abiding and accountable behaviors. Safety and security shall be a priority component of this responsibility as it pertains to staff, victims, citizens, and offenders.

# SPECIAL EDITION

## COVID-19 Vaccine Information



## From the Commissioner



As part of the Agency's ongoing effort to keep you informed on topics related to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am pleased to share with you this special COVID-19 Vaccination edition of the Pride at Work newsletter. Within these pages you will find information dealing with virtually every aspect of the COVID-19 vaccines that are currently being administered to our staff. From answers to frequently asked questions, to what to expect after getting vaccinated, and even a side-

to-side comparison between the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

The majority of the information in this special edition of the newsletter is taken directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website – so you know it is accurate and up-to-date as possible.

Please take the time to read this informative and important information. Now more than ever, I cannot thank you all enough for your commitment to this great Agency. I feel truly honored to work with such an incredible group of people.

I realize that the decision of whether or not to get the COVID-19 vaccine is a very personal one, I truly believe that getting vaccinated is the key to everyone staying healthy, and the start of getting back to normal.

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through  
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# Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines

## **Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?**

**No.** None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

## **After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?**

**No.** Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

If your body develops an immune response—the goal of vaccination—there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a **previous infection** and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

## **If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?**

**Yes.** Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, a vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments about who should be vaccinated first.

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

## **Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?**

**Yes.** COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications.



**Commissioner Quiros gets his first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine at the Hartford Correctional Center.**

# What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. 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.

## Common side effects

### On the arm where you got the shot:

- Pain
- Swelling

### Throughout the rest of your body:

- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Headache

## Helpful tips

If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

**To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot:**      **To reduce discomfort from fever:**

- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
- Use or exercise your arm.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Dress lightly.

## When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

## Remember

- Side effects may feel like flu and even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need 2 shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first one, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.
- It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.



## Ask your healthcare provider about getting started with v-safe

Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose

Learn more about **v-safe**.

[www.cdc.gov/vsafe](http://www.cdc.gov/vsafe)



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

# COVID-19 Vaccines and Allergic Reactions

If you have a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injectable medications, you may still get a COVID-19 vaccine. You should be monitored for 30 minutes after getting the vaccine.

If you've had an immediate allergic reaction to other vaccines or injectable medications, ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine. If you've ever had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to any ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine, the CDC recommends not getting that specific vaccine. Also, people who are allergic to polysorbate should not get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have an immediate or severe allergic reaction after getting the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, don't get the second dose.

As of January 10, 2021, a reported

**4,041,396**

first doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine had been administered in the United States & reports of

**0.03%**

adverse events after receipt of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

## COVID-19 Vaccines and Allergic Reactions

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site, seek immediate medical care by calling 911.

### If you have a severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine

CDC has learned of reports that some people have experienced severe allergic reactions—also known as anaphylaxis—after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. As an example, an allergic reaction is considered severe when a person needs to be treated with epinephrine or EpiPen® or if they must go to the hospital.

If you have had a severe allergic reaction to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should

not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. If you had a severe allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, CDC recommends that you should not get the second dose.

### If you have a non-severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine

CDC has also learned of reports that some people have experienced non-severe allergic reactions within 4 hours after getting vaccinated (known as immediate allergic reactions), such as hives, swelling, and wheezing (respiratory distress).

If you have had an immediate allergic reaction—even if it was not severe—to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, CDC recommends that you should not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. If you had an immediate allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get the second dose. Your doctor may refer you to a specialist in allergies and immunology to provide more care or advice.

### If you have had an allergic reaction to other types of vaccines

If you have had an immediate allergic reaction—even if it was not severe—to a vaccine or injectable therapy for another disease, ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine. Your doctor will help you decide if it is safe for you to get vaccinated.

### If you have allergies not related to vaccines

CDC recommends that people with a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injectable medications—such as food, pet, venom, environmental, or latex allergies—get vaccinated. People with a history of allergies to oral medications or a family history of severe allergic reactions may also get vaccinated.



## Around the Cell Block



**TEXAS** - Government agencies are warning the public of emerging COVID-19 vaccine related scams. Like being asked to pay out-of-pocket for the vaccine; being asked to pay to put your name on a vaccine waiting list; marketers offering to sell or ship doses of the vaccine for payment.

**PENNSYLVANIA** — The State’s Corrections Officers Association recently renewed their call for Governor Tom Wolf’s administration to prioritize correction officers in state prisons over smokers for the COVID-19 vaccine.

**MICHIGAN** - Prisoners and staff at a state correctional facility in West Michigan are now being tested daily for the coronavirus after the detection of the highly contagious B.1.1.7 variant. The variant, which first appeared in the United Kingdom in September.

## Vaccines and Allergies from page 3

### Safeguards Are in Place

CDC has provided recommendations for COVID-19 vaccination providers about how to prepare for the possibility of a severe allergic reaction:

All people who get a COVID-19 vaccine should be monitored on site. People who have had severe allergic reactions or who have had any type of immediate allergic reaction to a vaccine or injectable therapy should be monitored for at least 30 minutes after getting the vaccine. All other people should be monitored for at least 15 minutes after getting the vaccine.

Vaccination providers should have appropriate medications and equipment—such as epinephrine, antihistamines, stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, and timing devices to check your pulse—at all COVID-19 vaccination sites.

If you experience a severe allergic reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine, vaccination providers should provide rapid care and call for emergency medical services. You should continue to be monitored in a medical facility for at least several hours.

### CDC Is Monitoring Reports of Severe Allergic Reactions

If someone has a severe allergic reaction after getting vaccinated, their vaccination provider will send a report to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).external icon VAERS is the national system that collects reports from healthcare professionals, vaccine manufacturers, and the public about adverse events that happen after vaccination. Reports of adverse events that are unexpected, appear to happen more often than expected, or have unusual patterns are followed up with specific studies.

***Total  
Supervised  
Population  
on  
February 16, 2021  
13,190  
On February 16, 2020  
the population was  
17,009***

# I got the Covid-19 Vaccine, Can I Stop Wearing a Mask

In a word - No.

Experts want to learn more about the protection that a COVID-19 vaccine provides and how long immunity lasts before changing safety recommendations. Factors such as how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities will also affect these recommendations.

In the meantime, the CDC recommends following these precautions for avoiding infection with the COVID-19 virus:

**Avoid Close Contact** -This means avoiding close contact (within about 6 feet, or 2 meters) with anyone who is sick or has symptoms. Also, keep distance between yourself and others. This is especially important if you have a higher risk of serious illness.

**Wear Cloth Face Coverings in Public Places** - Cloth face coverings offer extra protection in places such as the grocery store, where it's difficult to avoid close contact with others. Surgical masks may be used if available. N95 respirators should be reserved for health care providers.



**Practice Good Hygiene** - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away the used tissue. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Avoid sharing dishes, glasses, bedding and other household items if you're sick. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily.

**Stay Home if You Are Sick** -Stay home from work, school and public areas if you're sick, unless you're going to get medical care. Avoid public transportation, taxis and ride-sharing if you're sick. If you have a chronic medical condition and may have a higher risk of serious illness, check with your doctor about other ways to protect yourself.

# Pfizer and Moderna Vaccine Comparison

In December 2020, two COVID-19 vaccines were granted Emergency Use Authorization(EUA) by the FDA. Produced by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna, both vaccines use the same technology (mRNA). However, some noteworthy differences between the vaccines exist. A comparison of key details about both vaccines can be found below. This list is not exhaustive.

	<b>Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine</b>	<b>Moderna vaccine</b>
<b>Target population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved for people aged 16 and older.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved for people aged 18 and older.</li> </ul>
<b>Vaccine efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>95% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infection.</li> <li>Efficacy rates did not vary based on demographic factors like age, race, or ethnicity.</li> <li>Insufficient data to determine if asymptomatic infection or infection transmission is prevented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>94.1% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infection.</li> <li>Slightly lower efficacy in individuals older than 65. No difference in efficacy based on race or ethnicity.</li> <li>Insufficient data to determine if asymptomatic infection or infection transmission is prevented.</li> </ul>
<b>Vaccine administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two shots are required, delivered 21 days apart. Each dose contains 30 micrograms of vaccine.</li> <li>The vaccine must be mixed with diluent before administration.</li> <li>Each vial contains up to six doses. Undiluted vials can be stored refrigerated for up to five days and at room temperature for no more than two hours. Mixed vaccine must be used within six hours or discarded.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two shots are required, delivered 28 days apart. Each dose contains 100 micrograms of vaccine.</li> <li>No diluent is required.</li> <li>Each vial contains 10 doses. However, early field use suggests that a vial may yield an 11th dose due to manufacturer overfilling. Before first use, vials can be stored refrigerated for up to 30 days and at room temperature for up to 12 hours. Vaccine must be used within 6 hours of withdrawing the first dose or discarded.</li> </ul>
<b>Possible side effects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most common side effects: injection site pain, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, and fever.</li> <li>Side effects are more common after the second dose and are reported more by younger adults.</li> <li>Rarer side effects: severe allergic reactions, Bell's palsy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most common side effects: injection site pain, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, and fever.</li> <li>Side effects are more common after the second dose and are reported more by younger adults.</li> <li>Rarer side effects: Bell's palsy.</li> </ul>
<b>Safety for pregnant/lactating individuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No human data is available but interim animal study data show no issues.</li> <li>Pregnant/lactating people should discuss the risks and benefits with their provider.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No human data is available but completed animal studies show no issues.</li> <li>Pregnant/lactating people should discuss the risks and benefits with their provider.</li> </ul>
<b>Storage requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be shipped at -94°F, requires an ultra-cold freezer and dry ice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be shipped at -4°F, which is the temperature of a refrigerator freezer.</li> </ul>



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# COVID FATIGUE RELIEF KIT



## Solutions from Your EAP to Help You Through the Pandemic

We all feel some degree of Covid-19 fatigue: stress, anxiety, grief, depression, and more. The pandemic is taking a terrible toll on everyone's mental health.

But you can get help from your EAP! We offer five different tools with dozens of solutions you can access to lessen the strain of the pandemic.

### Login and Registration Instructions

1. Go to [www.PublicSafetyEAP.com](http://www.PublicSafetyEAP.com) and click the **Employee & Family Login**.
2. Enter your unique Username and Password OR if you have not registered, complete steps (a) and (b).
  - (a) Click on **REGISTER**.
  - (b) Fill out the Registration form to create your own Username and Password, then click **Register**.
3. **You only need to register once!**

### 1 Coronavirus (Covid-19) Resource Center

Your online ESI Covid-19 Resource Center offers hundreds of articles, videos, and tools to help you with positive information to strengthen your coping skills and reduce your stress.

#### SAMPLE OF PANDEMIC RESOURCES

- Hundreds of Articles and Instruction
- School Staff, Students and Distance Learning
- Support for First Responders
- Working Remotely
- Supporting At-Home Children

### 2 ESI Online Training Center

Employees have free access to more than 8,000 trainings in the ESI Training Library. Simply go to [PublicSafetyEAP.com](http://PublicSafetyEAP.com) and click the employee and family login button at the top of the page. First click the Training Center tile, then click New & Improved Trainings and then enter 'Covid' in the search bar to find video trainings that will help.

#### SOME OF THE COVID-19 TRAININGS

- Managing Stress and Anxiety During Covid
- Working Remotely
- Preparing for an Epidemic
- Travel During Covid-19
- Safe Re-entry During Covid-19

### 3 Personal & Professional Coaching

ESI is the only EAP to offer 18 personal and professional coaching programs delivered by certified coaches. Simply call 1-888-327-1060 to schedule telephonic coaching for any issue, from dealing with a financial setback, to managing stress or weight gain related to being cooped up, or dealing effectively with anger and interpersonal communications.

#### ESI COACHING PROGRAMS

- Personal Finances
- Budgeting
- Balancing Life at Work and at Home
- Resilience
- Effective Communication
- Home Purchasing
- Student Debt
- Yoga and Relaxation for Beginners
- Workplace Conflict
- Saving & Spending
- Basic Supervisory Skills
- Practical Aspects of Retirement
- Fitness
- Nutrition
- Weight Loss
- Stress
- Tobacco Cessation
- Drugs and Alcohol

### 4 25,000 Self-Help Solutions

To find help for any of the Covid-related problems you may face, simply visit the ESI home page and click on the Employee and Family Login. Enter 'Covid' in the search box to explore hundreds of helpful articles. Or click on the information tiles to access dozens of tools, calculators, videos, and articles addressing pandemic-related issues involving caregiving, debt, stress, grief, and more.

#### COVID-19 SELF-HELP RESOURCES INCLUDE

- Health and Wellness Resources
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience
- Health Assessments
- 700 Health Videos

### 5 ESI Counseling with 98% Satisfaction

ESI offers the most effective counseling in the nation, with a year-after-year 98% employee satisfaction rate. If you or your family experience Covid-19 related stress, anxiety, or any other issue, ESI counselors are here for you 24/7/365. Just call 1-888-327-1060.

- *No other Employee Assistance Program offers more.*
- *No other EAP delivers better results.*