Making the Decision to Get a COVID-19 Vaccine

Wyoming Department of Health
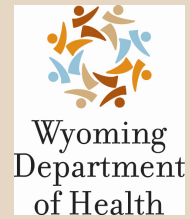
Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

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.

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.

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. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

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

Yes. you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That's because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again.

Learn more about why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection than getting infected. If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

I've heard the COVID-19 vaccines have side effects. What should I expect?

Serious side effects are very rare. Mild side effects, like soreness, headache, or fever, are signs that your nosy is building up protection against the virus and typically go away in one to two days. Even if you don't experience any side effects, your immune system is still building your protection against the virus. Vaccines don't generally have long-term side effects and there is no reason to believe the COVID-19 vaccine will.

Sources: CDC.gov, Public Health Communications Collaborative