



COVID-19 VACCINE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Benefits of Being Fully Vaccinated and Boosted Against COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines can prevent infection and severe illness!

- All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be safe and effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death caused by COVID-19.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all people ages 6 months and older receive an updated (bivalent) booster, if eligible, including those who are moderately or severely immunocompromised.

Help reduce the spread of the virus by being fully vaccinated and boosted!

- Being fully vaccinated with the complete primary series and the updated bivalent booster for COVID-19 will help reduce spread of the virus and protect you and your loved ones.

ABOUT THE VACCINE

How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the COVID-19 virus and protects you from getting infected. The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain the live COVID-19 virus and will not make you sick with COVID-19.

How do I decide which COVID-19 vaccine is best for me?

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for anyone age 6 months or older. All four approved or authorized COVID-19 vaccines in the United States are safe and highly effective in preventing COVID-19 hospitalization and death. For your primary series, your options are Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, Novavax, and Johnson & Johnson (J&J). However, the CDC now recommends that the J&J vaccine only be considered in certain situations; please discuss with your medical provider. To be fully up to date with COVID-19 vaccination, a bivalent booster is recommended two months after your last COVID-19 dose.

GETTING VACCINATED

How much does the COVID-19 vaccine cost?

The COVID-19 vaccines are FREE. Any vaccine administration fees will be billed to your insurance provider. For uninsured patients, NEMS will work with federally funded COVID-19 assistance programs to cover any administration fees; you will not pay anything out of pocket for the COVID-19 vaccination. **For questions about covering this fee and for patients who are uninsured, please reach out to NEMS Member Services Department at (415) 391-9686 ext. 8160.**

What if I only received the first dose of a multi-dose primary series that is NOT FDA-approved/authorized?

If you received a World Health Organization (WHO) authorized COVID-19 vaccine, you do NOT need to restart a primary vaccination series in the United States. Complete the primary series with Moderna, Novavax, or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine dose(s) as close to the recommended time as possible and space it out from the last vaccine dose by at least 28 days. You can get an age-appropriate bivalent mRNA booster dose if eligible.



COVID-19 VACCINE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

If I am pregnant or breastfeeding, should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Research shows that COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy and while breastfeeding is safe and effective. In fact, if you are pregnant, you are more likely to get very sick from a COVID-19 infection compared to others who are not pregnant. COVID-19 vaccination can help protect you and your baby from serious health problems caused by COVID-19. Please consult with your obstetrics provider if you have any concerns.

If I have allergies, should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

The CDC recommends that people with a history of severe allergic reactions that are not related to vaccines or injectable medications should get vaccinated. Prior to getting the vaccine, NEMS clinical staff will ask you a series of screening questions to determine if any allergies make it unsafe for you to receive the vaccine. Severe allergic reactions from the vaccine are rare; and those that do occur, primarily occur shortly after receiving the vaccine. You can also consult with your medical provider to see if the vaccine is right for you.

If I have a weakened immune system or take immunosuppressive drugs, should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for individuals who are moderately or severely immunocompromised. Since your immune response to COVID-19 vaccination may not be as strong as others who are not immunocompromised, you may require additional COVID-19 vaccine doses to be fully up to date; please consult with your medical provider. You may also want to consider taking additional measures in public settings, such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and washing your hands frequently.

Am I eligible to receive more than one bivalent booster?

No, the current guidance recommends just one bivalent booster at this time. However, it is likely that the bivalent booster will be an annual recommendation.

AFTER RECEIVING THE VACCINE

What side effects should I expect after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

Some people may experience pain and swelling on the arm where you got the vaccine shot, fatigue, headache, chills, nausea and/or fever. However, these side effects usually last one to two days. If the redness or tenderness where you got the vaccine shot increases after 24 hours or if your side effects are worrying you and persist, call your medical provider.

Adverse side effects are extremely rare. However, if you experience severe or persistent headaches or blurred vision, shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling, persistent abdominal pain and/or easy bruising or tiny blood spots under the skin beyond where you got the vaccine shot, seek medical care right away.

This resource and any associated de minimis items are supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$653,062 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov).

NEMS complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Spanish ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (415) 391-9686 ext. 8160 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929).

Chinese 注意：如果您使用中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 (415) 391-9686 轉內線 8160 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929)。

Vietnamese CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số (415) 391-9686 ext. 8160 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929).