NORTH Dakota | Health
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COVID-19 Vaccine & Young Adults

Is there a vaccine that protects against COVID-19?

Yes. Currently, there are three vaccines available to prevent COVID-19 in the U.S.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization permits the emergency use of the unlicensed but authorized products for Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson [Janssen] COVID-19 vaccines.

The FDA has fully approved Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for people 16 and older. Pfizer's Comirnaty (brand name: Co-mir-naat-ee) was approved based on strong safety and effectiveness data. Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine continues to be available through FDA emergency use authorization for adolescents ages 12 – 15.

Who is currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, and where can I find a vaccine in my area?

COVID-19 vaccination is available for everyone 12 years of age and older. You can find providers offering COVID-19 vaccines in your area by visiting the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) website here.

How much will the COVID-19 vaccine cost?

There should be no out-of-pocket costs for a COVID-19 vaccine. Health care providers may charge a fee to administer the vaccine. Health insurance will cover these fees. Those who are uninsured and unable to pay the administration fee cannot be turned away.

I am young and healthy; why should I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

You can get back to normal activities safely.
- Prevent yourself from getting sick and missing class and activities.
- Travel domestically and refrain from testing before/after travel and self-quarantine after travel.
- Avoid quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic.
  Refrain from regular testing required for activities/athletics.

To read more about what activities fully vaccinated individuals can resume *safely*, please visit the CDC website here.

Protect yourself from the potential long-term impacts of the disease – like long COVID.
- The virus can have a significant and long-term impact on your lungs, heart, kidneys, and nervous system.
- Up to 33% of individuals who tested positive for COVID, but weren't hospitalized from the virus, still experience symptoms up to three months later.
- COVID-19 may lead to a 6x higher risk of erectile dysfunction compared to those with no history of COVID-19 infection.

- One in three COVID-19 survivors have suffered from a neurological or mental health condition within six months of their COVID-19 diagnoses. To put this into perspective, these conditions were 44% higher after COVID-19 than after the flu.

Protect those around you who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.
- Recent data indicates that fully vaccinated individuals are more likely to be protected from asymptomatic infection and less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others.
- When you are fully vaccinated you protect those around you who are most vulnerable to COVID-19, whether that's a grandparent, your elderly neighbor, or a friend with cancer.

Provides protection against variants strains of the virus.
- Getting vaccinated has been shown to provide protection against variants of the virus, such as Delta, which is now the dominant variant in the U.S.
- Research suggests that Delta may be 200% more transmissible and have a 1000% higher viral load than the original strain of the virus.

What are common side effects after vaccination?

Common side effects from vaccination include pain, swelling or redness where the shot was given, a mild fever, chills, fatigue, headache, and muscle and joint aches. For vaccines that require two doses (Pfizer and Moderna), side effects are more common after the second dose.

What about serious adverse events following vaccination?

COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to be both safe and effective. However, COVID-19 vaccines have also been linked to rare, more serious side effects. But, the benefits of vaccinating continue to far outweigh the risk associated with COVID-19 infection. Vaccinating is the best way to protect yourself and those around you. Vvirtually all recent COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths are occurring among unvaccinated individuals.

I've already had COVID-19. Why do I need the vaccine?

The CDC recommends that everyone be vaccinated, regardless of whether or not they already had COVID-19 because:
- Immunity after COVID is unpredictable.
- We do not know how long protection from COVID-19 lasts after the initial infection.
- We do not know how well natural infection protects against the variant strains.
- Reinfection is possible.

COVID-19 vaccines provide a stronger and more consistent immune response than natural infection. Getting vaccinated after recovering from COVID-19 acts as a booster for the immune system. This immune system "boost" may offer additional protection against COVID-19 variants and prevent the spread of COVID-19 to others.

Do COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility?

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine can lead to infertility. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), and

the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) have issued a joint statement to address this claim: "While fertility was not specifically studied in clinical trials of the vaccine, no loss of fertility has been reported among trial participants or among the millions who have received the vaccines since they were authorized, and no signs of infertility appeared in animal studies." To read more about COVID-19 vaccines and infertility, please see the NDDoH *COVID-19 Vaccines & Infertility* handout here.