COVID-19, also called coronavirus, is making people sick around the world. In addition to wearing masks, keeping 6 feet apart and washing our hands, vaccines help slow the spread of COVID-19.

**COVID-19 vaccines teach your body how to fight off the virus that makes you sick.**

COVID-19 vaccines (a shot) will not give you the disease. Vaccines make your body think you have the disease and be ready to fight it off without actually getting it. The vaccine will help keep you from getting very sick if you are exposed to the coronavirus.

**The vaccines are safe and effective.**

Medical and public health experts nationally and in Vermont recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine. All three vaccines available in Vermont went through clinical trials before being authorized for emergency use. Researchers had been working on vaccines for other coronaviruses for decades. All three vaccines are safe and similarly effective at preventing hospitalization and death. This is the standard commonly used to assess other vaccines like the flu shot. They do not contain microchips, fetal tissue, pork products, eggs, gelatin, latex or preservatives.

**COVID-19 vaccines free for anyone who is eligible.**

People in Vermont can make an appointment for the COVID-19 vaccine. They are provided to Vermonters at no cost, even if you don’t have health insurance. The provider that gives you your vaccine may charge an administrative fee to your insurance, but you are guaranteed a COVID-19 vaccine without paying a fee.

**Most people with medical conditions should still get a vaccine.**

People with some conditions are more likely to get very sick if they get COVID-19, so getting vaccinated could be even more important. If you are unsure if you should get the vaccine, talk to your health care provider. If you don’t have a health care provider, call 2-1-1 to be connected to a clinic near you.

**Side effects mean the vaccine is working.**

You may have side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. This is normal and is how your body learns to fight COVID-19. Some people have no side effects. Common side effects are:

- injection site pain
- headache
- tiredness
- muscle aches
- chills
- fever
You can take pain relievers for any side effects you may have. They should go away in a few days. Some people have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine, but this is rare.

**It takes 14 days after your final dose of vaccine to be protected from COVID-19.**

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is one-dose vaccine. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is two doses given about 21 days apart. The Moderna vaccine is two doses given about 28 days apart. If you get a two-dose vaccine, your second dose appointment should be made at your first dose appointment. Or you can make a second dose appointment on your own.

**Keep taking steps to prevent COVID-19 for two weeks after getting vaccinated.**

It takes time for the vaccine to teach your body to fight COVID-19. So, you may not be protected by the vaccine until a few weeks after you get all of the doses for the type of vaccine you receive. Until then, stay home when you’re sick, keep wearing masks, keep 6 feet apart and wash your hands, especially around people who haven’t been vaccinated or people who are at a greater risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

Stay home if sick  
Wear a mask  
Avoid crowds  
Keep 6 feet apart  
Wash your hands

**Make an appointment for the vaccine online or by phone.**

Online: healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine

By phone: 855-722-7878.

- Press 1 for to speak with someone in a language other than English.
- This number accepts TTY calls.

If you are unable to make the appointment for yourself, ask a trusted friend, family member, or case manager to do it for you.

**You can get a ride to your appointment if you need one.**

Call Vermont Public Transportation Association at 802-442-0629 (toll-free 833-387-7200). Call at least 48 hours ahead to schedule ride.

**Learn more about vaccines and getting an appointment.**

- Go to healthvermont.gov/COVID19vaccine