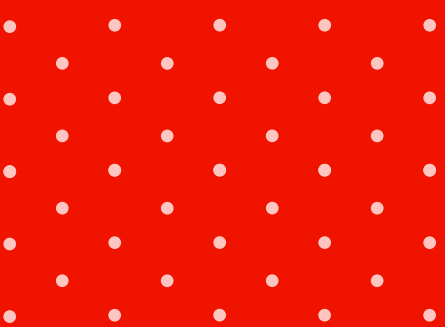




# COVID-19 Vaccination Facts Handbook



Published May 1, 2021

# ABOUT AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability, and personal fulfillment.

AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin.

To learn more, visit [aarp.org](http://aarp.org) or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

# AFTER VACCINATION



## What to expect

The coronavirus vaccines have been shown to be effective in older adults. Not everyone will experience side effects, but most who do will have flu-like symptoms that resolve in a few days, including:

- Injection-site pain and swelling
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Fever
- Muscle and joint pain
- Nausea
- Delayed swelling, redness, or a rash at the injection site
- Swollen lymph nodes



Side effects are similar for each of the 3 approved vaccines (Pfizer-BioNtech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson). Because the second dose builds upon the first, the second dose of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines may present side effects that can include fatigue, chills, headache, muscle aches and pains, and fever.

## Managing symptoms

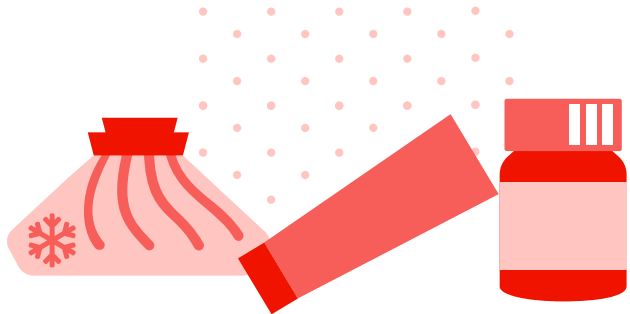
Avoid use of pain relievers before vaccination for the purpose of preventing post-vaccination symptoms. Wait until after experiencing side effects to take any medication.

Side effects may influence the ability to perform daily activities. Plan for plenty of time to rest in the days immediately after you get a dose of the vaccine.

For pain or discomfort after vaccination, use an over-the-counter pain reliever such as a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug or acetaminophen.

Apply ice to reduce arm soreness or swelling. Otherwise, just rest for a day or two—most people feel better within 48 to 72 hours.

Any delayed reaction at the injection site—typically described as a rash, itchiness, or redness that appears 5 to 10 days after vaccination—is considered to be similar to a mild allergic reaction. Use an over-the-counter antihistamine or a topical steroid like hydrocortisone for treatment.



## What's next?



The coronavirus is still spreading and the majority of Americans have yet to be vaccinated—so precautions are still necessary to protect yourself and others.

Even after becoming fully vaccinated, full immunity is not immediate. It takes 2 weeks after the second dose to build full protection against the virus.

### **Do I still need to wear a mask?**

Wearing masks and physically distancing are still important to help slow its spread until we can reach herd immunity—when an estimated 70 to 85 percent of the population is vaccinated.

Masking also helps slow the spread of coronavirus variants—and prevent the emergence of new ones—because the virus can't mutate if it is not spreading.

### **It is still possible to catch COVID-19.**

Although all vaccines authorized for emergency use in the U.S. have been found to be highly effective against severe disease and death from COVID-19, there is still a chance of viral infection.

### **Infecting others is still possible.**

There is a small chance of becoming infected without realizing it, making it possible to transmit the virus to someone who is not vaccinated.

Research is still underway on whether the vaccines prevent the asymptomatic spread of the virus.

## What to do with the vaccine card

Take a photograph of the card as a backup copy and keep the original stored in a safe place where you can easily access it if needed. Also consider making hard copies of the card. To prevent identity theft, try to avoid losing the original or any copies and be careful about posting photos of your card on social media without obscuring your personal information. Additionally, bring your card to your primary care provider, so that your vaccination information can be input into its records.

## What to do if you lose the vaccine card

First, return to your vaccination site and see if a replacement card can be provided. Bring a form of ID and try to recall the date you were vaccinated. If you received 2 shots at different places, return to the site where you got the second dose, which may be able to provide the information needed for a complete card.

If you can't get a replacement card, it is possible to receive vaccine information from the state health department, which keeps an electronic record of all vaccine administrations. Visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) to find your state's immunization information system. How to access those immunization records differs by state, but you should be able to use a printout of that information in place of the card.

# HANGING OUT AND SOCIALIZING WITH FRIENDS



I GOT MY  
COVID-19  
VACCINE

As we know more, the CDC will continue to update recommendations for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people. However, it is important to take careful socializing precautions by keeping the following in mind:

## **For fully vaccinated individuals visiting other fully vaccinated people:**

Fully vaccinated people can gather indoors with others who are also fully vaccinated without wearing masks or physical distancing, if you choose. The chance of anyone getting infected is considered remote, per the CDC.

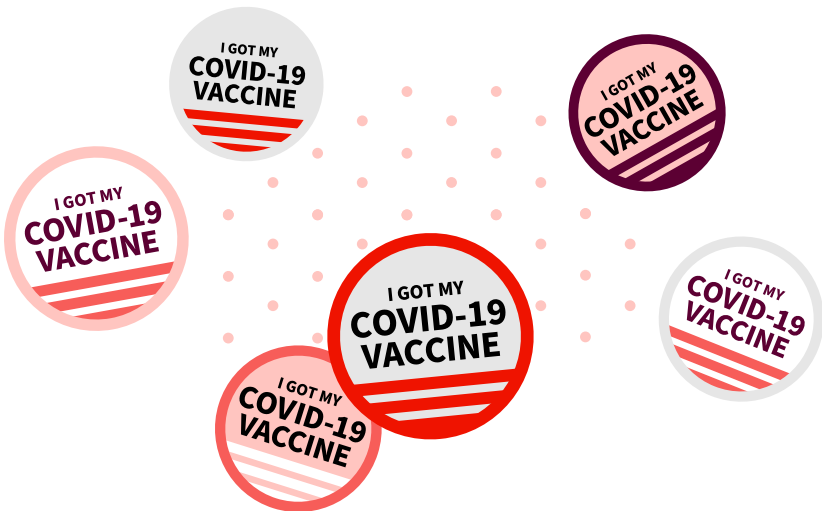
## **For fully vaccinated individuals visiting low-risk unvaccinated people:**

According to the CDC, if it has been at least 2 weeks since receiving the final COVID-19 vaccine, and your children, grandchildren, or friends are at low risk for a severe case of coronavirus, feel free to visit with those living in a single household without wearing a mask or needing to physically distance.

## For fully vaccinated individuals visiting high-risk unvaccinated people:

When fully vaccinated individuals visit unvaccinated people from more than one household and are around people who are at high risk of getting severely ill from COVID-19, it is requested that you:

- Wear a well-fitted mask
- Stay at least 6 feet from people you do not live with
- Avoid medium-size and large in-person gatherings
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow guidance issued by individual employers
- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations





# Going on vacation

Travel is still discouraged even for those who are vaccinated, despite the rise in the number of airline passengers.

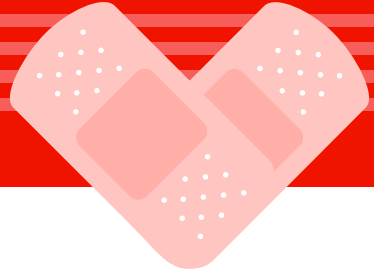
## The CDC's new travel recommendations are:

- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to get a COVID-19 test or quarantine before or after domestic travel
- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to be tested for COVID-19 before taking an international trip but are required to be tested before returning to the U.S.
- After returning from another country, fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine but should get tested for the coronavirus 3 to 5 days after arriving in the U.S.
- Those who are not fully vaccinated should still avoid nonessential travel
- Everyone should continue to wear masks in public and practice other infection prevention measures such as frequent handwashing and physical distancing

The guidance for unvaccinated travelers remains unchanged:

- Get tested 1 to 3 days before domestic travel and 3 to 5 days after returning
- Self-quarantine at home for 7 days after travel or 10 days if you don't get tested at the conclusion of your trip

# PROTECTING FAMILY AND FRIENDS

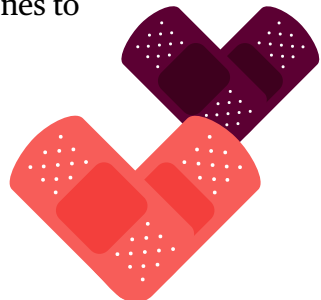


## Keeping family safe as part of a multigenerational household

If your entire household is not fully vaccinated, continue to take precautions inside and outside of your home to continue to protect yourself and those around you.

Continue to wear a mask, practice physical distancing, wash your hands, and make informed decisions when meeting others outside of your household.

Most importantly, continue to let others in your household know about precautionary measures, vaccine facts, and local COVID-19 guidelines to keep family and friends well informed.



# COVID-19 VACCINATION RESOURCES

For accurate and updated information surrounding COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine, please visit or contact these trusted resources.

## **AARP COVID-19 Vaccine Info**

[aarp.org/vaccineinfo](http://aarp.org/vaccineinfo)

[chinese.aarp.org/vaccine](http://chinese.aarp.org/vaccine)

## **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

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

## **National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)**

[napca.org/covid-vaccine-info](http://napca.org/covid-vaccine-info)

## **NAPCA COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline:**

**English**

1-800-336-2722

**Tagalog / Filipino**

1-800-593-8087

**日本語 / Japanese**

1-800-398-1117

**Tiếng Việt / Vietnamese**

1-800-582-4336

**廣東話 / Cantonese**

1-800-582-4218

**한국어 / Korean**

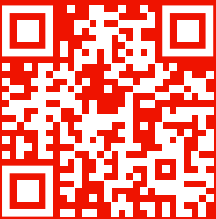
1-800-582-4259

**普通话 / Mandarin**

1-800-683-7427

**Español / Spanish**

1-800-948-3844



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