Debunking COVID-19 Vaccine Myths

COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and free for all Americans. They're also the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19—and the best way to get our lives back to normal.

Did you know?

- The vaccines are up to 95% effective, even more than the annual flu vaccine, which is typically 40% to 60% effective.
- If enough people are vaccinated, we can prevent 100,000 deaths or more.
- Almost all doctors who have been offered the vaccine have taken it.*

MYTH: You don't need be vaccinated because you already had COVID-19.

FACT: **Everyone should get vaccinated, even those who had COVID-19.** It's still unknown how long your body can protect you from getting COVID-19 again. There are documented cases of individuals getting sick from COVID-19 twice.

MYTH: Getting a vaccine will make me sick with COVID-19.

FACT: **COVID-19 vaccines do not contain any live virus,** so they cannot infect you with COVID-19.

MYTH: There could be serious side effects from getting a COVID-19 vaccine. We just don't know because the vaccines were developed so quickly.

FACT: **The speed of the vaccines' development was a result of cutting red tape** and bureaucracy, not cutting corners or bypassing any safety precautions.

After getting vaccinated, you may have pain, redness and swelling in the arm where you received your shot. You could feel tired or have a headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and nausea. These side effects are normal signs that the vaccine is working and your body is building protection. With millions of Americans having received the vaccine, we know that the most common side effects are not serious. Some people have had severe allergic reactions after getting vaccinated, mainly because they've had allergic reactions to vaccines in the past. To make sure you're safe, you must wait 15 minutes after vaccination before leaving your appointment.

MYTH: COVID-19 vaccines can change your DNA.

FACT: **COVID-19 vaccines do not change your DNA** or interact with it in any way. Every person has DNA, the biological instructions that make us unique. DNA instructions are passed

down from parents to their children. The COVID-19 vaccines do not affect DNA passed down from pregnant women to their unborn children.

The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are mRNA vaccines. Both trigger an immune response to protect us from COVID-19 infection using mRNA, a messenger molecule that works with our DNA. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters our cells, where our DNA is located.

Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is a viral vector vaccine. It uses a modified version of a harmless, non-COVID virus (the vector) to tell our cells to build protection against COVID-19. The instructions are in the form of genetic material but that material does not change your DNA. Cases of blood clotting have been reported among in women who had the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Those cases represent less than 1% of all Johnson & Johnson vaccines administered.

Note: In Illinois, 95% of vaccines administered have been Pfizer and Moderna. You can get vaccinated with one of those vaccines instead of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

MYTH: Getting vaccinated isn't safe if I want to get pregnant now or in the future.

FACT: **There is no evidence that a COVID-19 vaccine will cause any problems with pregnancy.** That includes your unborn baby's development. There is also no evidence of fertility problems resulting from COVID-19 vaccines. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) calls allegations linking vaccines to infertility "unfounded and scientifically disproven. ACOG recommends vaccination for all eligible people who may consider future pregnancy."

MYTH: I have to pay to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

FACT: **All COVID-19 vaccines are free of charge** to anyone living in the U.S. It doesn't matter if you have health insurance. Your immigration status also doesn't matter. COVID-19 vaccine providers cannot charge you for the vaccine or ask you to pay any administration fees, copays or coinsurance.

You cannot be denied a COVID-19 vaccine if you don't have health insurance, are underinsured or the vaccine provider is out of network. You can be asked to provide your health insurance information, if you have insurance. This can be private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid.

Sources: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
* The de Beaumont Foundation