



STAR VISTA

COVID-19 FACT SHEET

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. Because it is a new virus, scientists are learning more each day. Although most people who have COVID-19 have mild symptoms, COVID-19 can also cause severe illness and even death. Some groups, including older adults and people who have certain underlying medical conditions, are at increased risk of severe illness.

Why is the disease being called COVID-19?

On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, "CO" stands for corona, "VI" for virus, and "D" for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV."

How does the virus spread?

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet). People who are infected but do not show symptoms can also spread the virus to others. Cases of reinfection with COVID-19 have been reported but are rare. We are still learning about how the virus spreads and the severity of illness it causes.

COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person. How easily a virus spreads from person to person can vary. The virus that causes COVID-19 appears to

spread more efficiently than influenza but not as efficiently as measles, which is among the most contagious viruses known to affect people.

Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?

It is not yet known whether weather and temperature affect the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like those that cause the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months but that does not mean it is impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing.

Can mosquitoes or ticks spread the virus that causes COVID-19?

At this time, CDC has no data to suggest that this new coronavirus or other similar coronaviruses are spread by mosquitoes or ticks. The main way that COVID-19 spreads is from person to person.

What is community spread?

Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. Each health department determines community spread differently based on local conditions. For information on community spread in your area, visit your local health department's website.

Does CDC recommend the use of masks to prevent COVID-19?

Yes. CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people. When you wear a mask, you protect others as well as yourself. Masks work best when everyone wears one. A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially when indoors around people who do not live in your household.

Effective February 2, 2021, **Masks are required** on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

While masks are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a mask may not be feasible. In these instances, adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible.

UPDATE: New CDC guidelines regarding mask wearing- March 8, 2021

From CDC Director, Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH *"There are some activities that fully vaccinated people can begin to resume now in their own homes. Everyone- even those who are vaccinated, should continue with all mitigation strategies when in public settings. As the science evolves and more people get vaccinated, the CDC will continue to provide guidance to help fully vaccinated people safely resume more activities."*

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or staying 6 feet apart.
- Visit with unvaccinated people from one other household indoors without wearing masks or staying 6 feet apart if everyone in the other household is at low risk for severe disease.
- Refrain from quarantine and testing if they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 after contact with someone who has COVID-19.

A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the last required dose of vaccine. While the new guidance is a positive step, the vast majority of people need to be fully vaccinated before COVID-19 precautions can be lifted broadly. Until then, it is important that everyone continues to adhere to public health mitigation measures to protect the large number of people who remain unvaccinated.

Am I at risk for COVID-19 from mail, packages, or products?

Coronaviruses are thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Although the virus can survive for a short period on some surfaces, it is unlikely to be spread from domestic or international mail, products, or packaging. However, it may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Is it ok for me to donate blood?

In healthcare settings across the United States, donated blood is a lifesaving, essential part of caring for patients. The need for donated blood is constant, and blood centers are open and in urgent need of donations. CDC encourages people who are well to continue to donate blood if they are able, even if they are practicing social distancing because of COVID-19. CDC is supporting blood centers by providing recommendations that will keep donors and staff safe. Examples of these recommendations include spacing donor chairs 6 feet apart, thoroughly adhering to environmental cleaning practices, and encouraging donors to make donation appointments ahead of time.

What should I do if someone in my house gets sick?

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. The CDC has directions for those people who are recovering at home and their caregivers, including:

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others. Everyone else should wear masks at home. Masks offer some protection to the wearer and are also meant to protect those around the wearer in case they are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.

However, some people may need emergency medical attention. Watch for symptoms and learn when to seek emergency medical attention.

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for **emergency warning signs*** for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake.
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone.

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

What should I do if I have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?

What are the most common side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

After getting vaccinated, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

If I am pregnant, can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. If you are pregnant, you may choose to be vaccinated when it is available to you. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta.

People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them. There is no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including

COVID-19 vaccines. There is no routine recommendation for taking a pregnancy test before you get a COVID-19 vaccine.

How long does protection from a COVID-19 vaccine last?

We do not know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and death for a lot of people. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice.

Experts are working to learn more about both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity. CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That is because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again. Learn more about why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection than getting infected.

If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have gotten 2 doses of the vaccine?

Yes. To protect yourself and others, follow these recommendations:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- Avoid crowds.
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wash your hands often.

It is important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Experts are also looking at how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities. We also do not yet know whether getting a COVID-19 vaccine will prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to other people, even if you do not get sick yourself. CDC will continue to update this page as we learn more.

If I have an underlying condition, can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

People with underlying medical conditions can receive the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Learn more about vaccination considerations for people with underlying medical conditions. Vaccination is an important consideration for adults of any age with **certain underlying medical conditions** because they are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Can I get vaccinated against COVID-19 while I am currently sick with COVID-19?

No. People with COVID-19 who have symptoms should wait to be vaccinated until they have recovered from their illness and have met the criteria for discontinuing isolation; those without symptoms should also wait until they meet the criteria before getting vaccinated. According to the CDC, this guidance also applies to people who get COVID-19 before getting their second dose of vaccine.

What are the ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines?

The ingredients in currently available COVID-19 vaccines include mRNA, lipids, salts, sugars, and buffers. Buffers help maintain the stability of the pH solution. Vaccine ingredients can vary by manufacturer.

What is the risk of my child becoming sick with COVID-19?

Children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 and can get sick with COVID-19. Most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or they may have no symptoms at all ("asymptomatic"). Fewer children have been sick with

COVID-19 compared to adults. However, children with certain underlying medical conditions and infants (less than 1 year old) might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Some children have developed a rare but serious disease that is linked to COVID-19 called multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C).

Is it possible to have the flu and COVID-19 at the same time?

Yes. It is possible to test positive for flu (as well as other respiratory infections) and COVID-19 at the same time. Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis.

The best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated every year. Flu vaccines will not prevent COVID-19, but they will reduce your chances of getting flu.

Can someone test negative and later test positive on a viral test for COVID-19?

Yes, it is possible. You may test negative if the sample was collected early in your infection and test positive later during this illness. You could also be exposed to COVID-19 after the test and get infected then. Even if you test negative, you still should take steps to protect yourself and others

Are there medications I should avoid taking if I have COVID-19?

Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that taking any specific medications, like blood pressure medication or ibuprofen, leads to more severe illness from COVID-19.

- Continue to take your medications and to follow your treatment plan as prescribed by your healthcare provider. Any changes to your medications should only be made after talking with your healthcare provider.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Are people with disabilities at higher risk?

Adults with disabilities are more likely to have an underlying medical condition that may put them at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19

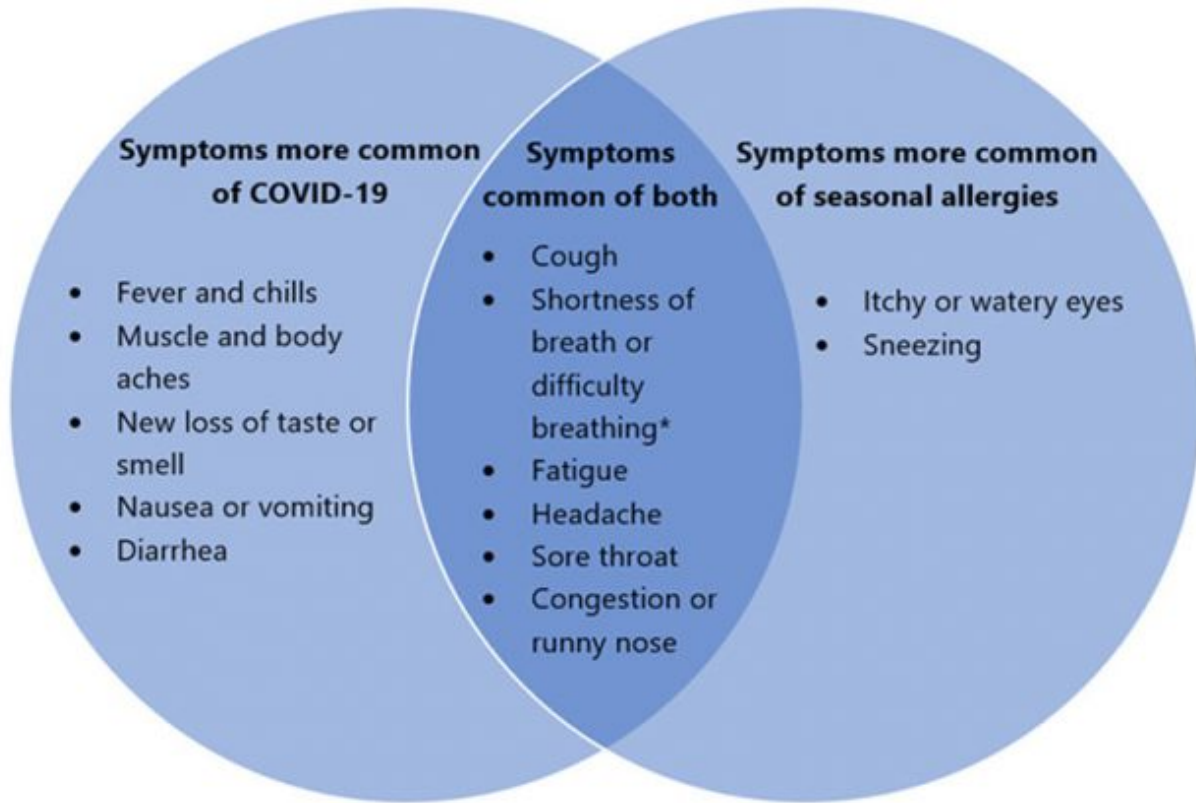
including, but not limited to, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, cancer, high blood pressure, and obesity. In addition, having a disability may make it harder to practice social distancing, wear a mask, and practice hand hygiene.

What is the difference between COVID-19 and seasonal allergies?

COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory illness caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19). Seasonal allergies triggered by airborne pollen can lead to seasonal allergic rhinitis, which affects the nose and sinuses, and seasonal allergic conjunctivitis, which affects the eyes.

COVID-19 and seasonal allergies share many symptoms, but there are some key differences between the two. For example, COVID-19 can cause fever, which is not a common symptom of seasonal allergies. The image below compares symptoms caused by allergies and COVID-19.

Because some of the symptoms of COVID-19 and seasonal allergies are similar, it may be difficult to tell the difference between them, and you may need to get a test to confirm your diagnosis.



Symptoms more common of COVID-19

- Fever and chills
- Muscle and body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Symptoms common of both
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing*
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

Symptoms more common of seasonal allergies

- Itchy or watery eyes/Sneezing

Does having seasonal allergies increase my risk of contracting COVID-19 or having more severe symptoms if I do contract COVID-19?

There is not enough scientific information currently to know whether having seasonal allergies puts you at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 or having more severe symptoms if you do contract COVID-19. We do know that older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like obesity, diabetes, or heart or lung disease are at higher risk for developing more serious complications when they have COVID-19. Get more information on people at high risk for severe COVID-19.

What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing has been used for decades by state and local health departments to slow or stop the spread of infectious diseases.

Contact tracing slows the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and should monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Helping people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 get tested.
- Asking people to self-isolate if they have COVID-19 or self-quarantine if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19

*During contact tracing, the health department staff **will not** ask you for*

- Money
- Social Security number
- Bank account information
- Salary information
- Credit card numbers

What is considered a close contact to someone with COVID-19?

For COVID-19, a close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 48 hours (or 2 days) before the person has any symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

Am I considered a close contact if I am wearing a mask?

Yes, you are still considered a close contact even if you were wearing a mask while you were around someone with COVID-19. Although masks provide some measure of protection to the wearer, there is always the chance that you have been infected.

What will happen during contact tracing if I am diagnosed with COVID-19?

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, someone from the health department may call you to check on your health, discuss who you have been around, and ask where you spent time while you may have been able to spread COVID-19 to others. You will also be asked to continue to stay at home and self-isolate, away from others.

- Your name **will not** be shared with those you came in contact with.
- The health department staff **will not** ask you for
 - Money
 - Social Security number
 - Bank account information
 - Salary information, or
 - Credit card numbers
- Self-isolation means staying at home in a specific room away from other people and pets, and using a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Self-isolation helps slow the spread of COVID-19 and can help protect the health of your family, friends, neighbors, and others you may come in contact.
- If you need support or assistance while in self-isolation, your health department or community organizations may be able to provide assistance.

Watch for or monitor your symptoms of COVID-19. If your symptoms worsen or become severe, you should seek medical care.

Can I get COVID-19 from my pets or other animals?

Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.

However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene.

Can animals carry the virus that causes COVID-19 on their skin or fur?

Although we know certain bacteria and fungi can be carried on fur and hair, there is no evidence that viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19, can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets.

However, because animals can sometimes carry other germs that can make people sick, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, including washing hands before and after interacting with them.

Can I take my dog to daycare or a groomer?

Until we know more about how this virus affects animals, CDC encourages pet owners to treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from possible infection. This means limiting contact between your pets and people outside your household as much as possible and avoiding places where large numbers of people gather.

Some areas are allowing groomers and boarding facilities such as dog daycares to open. If you must take your pet to a groomer or boarding facility, follow any protocols put into place at the facility, such as wearing a [mask](#) and maintaining at least 6 feet of space between yourself and others if possible.

Limit pet items brought from home to the groomer or boarding facility and disinfect any objects that are taken into a facility and returned home (such as leashes, bowls, and toys). Use an EPA-registered disinfectant external icon to clean items and rinse thoroughly with clean water afterwards. **Do not** wipe or bathe your pet with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or other products, such as hand sanitizer, counter-cleaning wipes, or other industrial or

surface cleaners. If you have questions about appropriate products for bathing or cleaning your pet, talk to your veterinarian.

Do not put masks on pets, and do not take a sick pet to a groomer or boarding facility. Signs of sickness in dogs may include fever, coughing, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, lethargy, sneezing, discharge from the nose or eyes, vomiting, or diarrhea. If you think your pet is sick, call your veterinarian. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

What should I do if my pet gets sick and I think it is COVID-19?

Most pets that have gotten sick from the virus that causes COVID-19 were infected after close contact with a person with COVID-19. Talk to your veterinarian about any health concerns you have about your pets.

If your pet gets sick after contact with a person with COVID-19, call your veterinarian and let them know the pet was around a person with COVID-19. If you are sick with COVID-19, do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic yourself. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care. Routine testing of animals for COVID-19 is not recommended at this time.

Can wild animals spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to people or pets?

Currently, there is no evidence to suggest the virus that causes COVID-19 is circulating in free-living wildlife in the United States, or that wildlife might be a source of infection for people in the United States.

If a wild animal were to become infected with the virus, we do not know whether the infection could then spread among wildlife or if it could spread to other animals, including pets. Further studies are needed to understand if and how different animals, including wildlife, could be affected by COVID-19. Because wildlife can carry other diseases, even without looking sick, it is always important to enjoy wildlife from a distance.

Take steps to prevent getting sick from wildlife in the United States:

- Keep your family, including pets, a safe distance away from wildlife.
- Do not feed wildlife or touch wildlife droppings.
- Always wash your hands and supervise children washing their hands after working or playing outside.
- Leave orphaned animals alone. Often, the parents are close by and will return for their young.
- Consult your state wildlife agency's guidance if you are preparing or consuming legally harvested game meat.
- Do not approach or touch a sick or dead animal – contact your state wildlife agency instead.

Can the virus that cause COVID-19 get back into the environment from wastewater and infect wildlife?

SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) can be shed in the feces of people with COVID-19. Genetic material from SARS-CoV-2 has been found in untreated wastewater. However, while data are limited, there is little evidence of infectious virus in wastewater, and no information to date that anyone has become sick with COVID-19 because of exposure to wastewater. It is possible that wildlife could become infected with SARS-CoV-2 from contact with untreated wastewater, but evidence from studies of virus infectivity in feces and survival in wastewater suggests that this transmission route is unlikely to occur.

What is community mitigation?

Community mitigation is a set of actions that people, and communities can take to slow the spread of infectious diseases like COVID-19. The goal of community mitigation in areas with local COVID-19 transmission is to slow its spread and to protect all individuals, especially those at increased risk for severe illness, while minimizing the negative impacts of these strategies.

What are community mitigation actions for COVID-19?

There are several actions that individuals and communities can take to help reduce the chance that they, their families and friends, and their communities get COVID-19. In general, the more cases spreading in your community, the more likely it will spread to you or your family. Also, the more people an individual

interacts with, and the longer each interaction lasts, the higher the risk of viral spread. Location can be a factor, too, with outdoor activities generally being less risky than indoor activities.

Individuals can take the following community mitigation actions:

- Wear a mask (with some exceptions) when in public settings or around others not living in the same household.
- Follow healthy hygiene practices, such as frequent hand washing.
- Practice social distancing
- Stay home when sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

Communities can take the following actions:

- Promote behaviors that prevent spread.
- Maintain healthy environments.
- Ensure institutions in the community are practicing appropriate precautions.
- Prepare for when someone gets sick.
- Close businesses and schools and limit other services.

Can I get COVID-19 from food (including restaurant take-out, produce, refrigerated, or packaged food) or drinking water?

Currently there is no evidence that people can get COVID-19 by eating or handling food.

It may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object, such as a food package or dining ware that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Follow food safety guidelines when handling and cleaning fresh produce. Do not wash produce with soap, bleach, sanitizer, alcohol, disinfectant or any other chemical.

There is also no current evidence that people can get COVID-19 by drinking water. The COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water. Conventional water treatment methods that use filtration and disinfection, such as those in

most municipal drinking water systems, should remove or kill the virus that causes COVID-19.

How do we know the vaccine is safe since it was developed so quickly?

While the vaccine was developed in record time, it is based on decade-long scientific methods. Additionally, the FDA used a demanding safety and efficacy standards, and no safety protocols were skipped. The faster timeline for the development of the vaccine was due to unprecedented world-wide collaboration and investment. The clinical trials that test the vaccine and ensure its safety did not skip any steps.

As a person of color, why should I believe a vaccine developed by the medical community and distributed by the government, is safe for me given all the inequities we have experienced?

The CDC acknowledges the negative and painful history of healthcare and research on communities of color, and current healthcare inequities that have rightfully created mistrust and skepticism about the vaccine for many in our communities of color. We know we need to find ways to authentically build trust, overcome barriers, and provide the information needed to support acceptance of the vaccine.

Validating the real history- and experience-based reasons why people are reluctant helps to establish common ground and empathize with why people are hesitant.

Will there be enough supply for me to get both doses?

Second doses are reserved for the individuals who receive their first dose. The provider who gave the first dose will prioritize a second dose of the vaccine for all individuals they vaccinate at the appropriate time.

Do I have to be a documented resident to be vaccinated?

No. All people, regardless of their immigration status, documentation, or residency, can get the vaccine. No immigration information is requested at vaccination sites.

How long does protection from a COVID-19 vaccine last?

We do not know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused serious illness and death for a lot of people. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice.

All information compiled in this document is sourced from current recommendations of the CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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