

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents, Guardians, and Teens

Q: Are there vaccines available for 16- and 17-year-olds?

A: COVID-19 vaccines are [safe and effective](#). In the United States, one COVID-19 vaccine has been granted authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in people age 16 and older – the Pfizer vaccine. The Pfizer vaccine had one of the largest clinical trials in history, with more than 43,000 voluntary participants. The other available vaccines, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson, which did not include those age 16 and 17 in their early Phase 3 clinical trials, only are authorized for those age 18 and older.

Q: Is parental/guardian consent required?

A: Yes. Children ages 16 and 17 who are not emancipated must have parental or legal guardian consent for any vaccine. A parent or legal guardian generally should accompany the minor to receive the vaccine, unless the administration of the vaccine occurs in a physician's office, school-based or school-associated clinic setting or similar setting.

Q: How long does it take for the vaccine to work?

A: The Pfizer vaccine is a two-dose series. The second dose is due 21 days after the first dose. Both doses are needed to achieve maximum protection. A person is considered fully immunized two weeks following the second dose.

Q: What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?

A: The most common side effects include soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site; fever and/or chills; headache; fatigue; and muscle or joint pain. These side effects are normal and a sign that your body is creating an immune response to protect you from COVID-19. Side effects typically last only a few days, and may increase with the second dose.

Q: Will COVID-19 vaccines change my DNA?

A: No. [COVID-19 vaccines](#) will not alter your DNA. The Pfizer vaccine is a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine. It provides instructions for the body to create the harmless surface or "spike" protein found in the virus that causes COVID-19; the body responds by building antibodies to destroy the protein.

Q: Do COVID-19 vaccines implant people with a tracking microchip?

A: No, vaccine injections do not contain tracking microchips.

Q: Do COVID-19 vaccines cause infertility?

A: No. There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems.

Q: What should I do before my vaccine appointment?

A: Eat and drink plenty of water before getting a vaccination. This is especially important for teens because [fainting after any vaccine is more common among adolescents](#). Get plenty of rest the night before your appointment if possible. Wear a short-sleeve or sleeveless shirt to allow easy access to the upper arm. If it's a colder day, layer with a cardigan or jacket that is easy to remove quickly.

Q: What should I do if I'm feeling anxious?

A: Breathe slowly and deeply before you receive the injection, and think about something relaxing. Avoid looking at the syringe, and relax the arm where you will receive the injection. Parents can calm their teens' anxieties by reminding them to breathe deeply or distract them by talking to them while they are getting the vaccination.

Q: I've seen a lot of rumors on social media about vaccines. How can I tell what is true?

A: The internet is filled with dangerous misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines, and it can be difficult to know what to trust. The best thing you can do is educate yourself about the vaccines with information from trustworthy sources. Learn more about [finding credible vaccine information in this article from the CDC](#), and separate myths from facts [on this page from the Ohio Department of Health](#).

Have more questions about COVID-19?

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) | [Myths vs. Facts](#) | [What to know before, during, and after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine](#)

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