

COVID-19 Vaccine

1. **What are the potential short-term, expected effects of the vaccine?**

Some participants in vaccine trials experienced what we would expect: a sore arm, warmth in the arm, a tired feeling, headache or a low-grade fever. Not everyone experiences these effects to the same degree, but if you do, it indicates the vaccine is working and your immune system is responding. Symptoms typically only last a few days, and you can take over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen for relief. After receiving the vaccine, you will be monitored for 15-30 minutes for any immediate reactions. All Novant Health vaccine sites have emergency kits and medical personnel on-site in case of reactions. Anyone with a history of anaphylaxis to other vaccines should talk with their healthcare provider about getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

2. **How and where can I get a vaccine?**

You do not need to be a Novant Health patient to be vaccinated by us, but appointments remain limited. They are tied to our vaccine allotment from the state. We add and open hundreds of appointments a week as soon as the state lets us know about our vaccine supply.

We encourage everyone to sign up for MyChart at MyNovant.org as that is the most convenient way for you to receive appointment notifications and to schedule.

All community members can pre-register for an appointment at GetVaccinated.org. After you complete the form, we will notify you once you become eligible.

If you are in a currently eligible group and there are no appointments available on MyChart, please check again later. Saturdays after noon are the best days to check for added appointments.

As you are scheduling an appointment in MyChart, we encourage you to also sign up for the waitlist at the same time. This will notify you if earlier appointments become available.

Although it will take time, Novant Health is committed to ensuring everyone who wants a vaccine will get one. While vaccine supplies across the nation are currently limited, it is important to vaccinate those who are more vulnerable as early as possible.

3. How do we know the vaccine is safe?

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must verify that the vaccines are safe and effective — and they have for the Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccines currently available. The FDA authorized the use of these vaccines after an independent committee reviewed and verified the data showing the vaccine is safe and effective.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices reviewed the data and recommended who should be vaccinated based on clinical trial results.

As with all drugs, the safety of the vaccine is continuously monitored.

At Novant Health, commitment to team member and patient safety will remain our priority. We will not administer a vaccine that is not safe.

4. Is there anyone who should NOT get the vaccine?

The only individuals who should not get the vaccine are those who have a history of severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Those who have had a history of an immediate allergic reaction to any other vaccine should talk with their healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of vaccination before making a decision. If you have had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction to any ingredient in the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine (such as polysorbate), you should not get that particular vaccine.

The vaccine is safe for those with underlying conditions and autoimmune diseases and has also been endorsed for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

If you have previously had COVID-19, you should still get the vaccine. It is not yet known if someone who has recovered from COVID-19 will have lasting immunity, so vaccination is still recommended. The CDC recommends for those who have tested positive to wait until their isolation period ends (10-14 days after their test) and they are symptom-free prior to vaccination.

5. When can we get back to normal?

Even with the vaccine, the safety behaviors of masking, physical distancing and hand washing are as critical as ever to reduce COVID-19 cases and keep our children safe.

Children under 16 will not receive vaccines until clinical trials are completed to ensure the vaccines are safe and work to prevent COVID-19 illness for that population.

It will take some time to establish herd immunity, which is when enough people become immune to a disease to prevent it from spreading. This will occur when about 80% of the population is vaccinated.

In the meantime, we must keep doing the same things we've been doing to stay safe.

6. Can I choose which vaccine I receive?

No. Vaccine supplies nationwide are limited, and we must administer the vaccines we receive. All vaccines currently available are safe and protect against COVID-19. Regardless of which vaccine you receive, you will be better protected than if you did not receive a vaccine.

The most important thing right now is to get as many people vaccinated using the vaccines available.

Stay informed with Novant Health at [GetVaccinated.Org](https://www.getvaccinated.org)