

Fast Facts About the mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, you've probably heard that a vaccine will help bring an end to the pandemic. Now that there are two vaccines authorized for use, you may have questions about those vaccines, especially in the age of misinformation. Here's what you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccines.

What type of vaccines are the COVID-19 vaccines?

Messenger RNA vaccines—also called mRNA vaccines—are some of the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States.

What are mRNA vaccines?

mRNA vaccines are a new type of vaccine to protect against infectious diseases. Unlike other vaccines, mRNA vaccines don't involve putting a weakened or inactivated germ into your body to trigger an immune response. Instead, mRNA vaccines teach your cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response, and then antibodies, inside your body to protect you from getting infected if you're exposed to the real virus.

Are they safe?

mRNA vaccines have been held to the same [rigorous safety and effectiveness standards](#) as all other types of vaccines in the United States. The only COVID-19 vaccines the Food and Drug Administration will make available for use in the United States (by approval or emergency use authorization) are those that meet these standards.

Can you get COVID-19 from the mRNA vaccines?

No, mRNA vaccines do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19.

Do the COVID-19 mRNA vaccines affect or interact with your DNA?

No, mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept. The cell breaks down and gets rid of the mRNA soon after it is finished using the instructions.

Can anyone get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Ultimately, the goal is that everyone who is able and wants to be vaccinated against COVID-19 receives two doses of one of the two authorized vaccines. However, because there are limited doses available, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued [guidelines](#) for who should receive vaccination priority. If you believe you fall in one of these categories, contact your doctor or employer for more information.

Source: CDC

