

COVID-19 Vaccine: Addressing Safety Concerns, A Guide for Community Service Providers



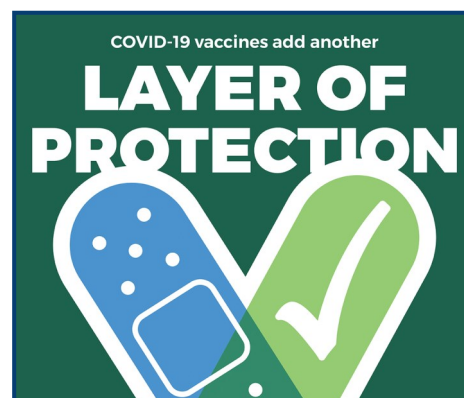
Overview

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. However, misinformation and rumors about the vaccines have left some people skeptical of their safety. Vaccination is a personal decision. It is important to arm our community with the knowledge to make an informed decision. Providing accurate information and debunking rumors can help alleviate fears and help people feel more confident in their decision to get vaccinated.

Addressing Misinformation

Two Types of COVID-19 Vaccines: mRNA and Viral Vector

- Pfizer and Moderna are mRNA vaccines. Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) is a viral vector vaccine. Both types of vaccines teach our immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Our immune system makes antibodies, which are what protect us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.
- None of the vaccines interact with a person's DNA or cause genetic changes because the instructions (genetic material) do not enter the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. After the mRNA gives the instructions, your cells break it down and get rid of it.
- None of the vaccines can give you COVID-19. They do not contain a live virus.
- mRNA vaccines are not brand new. The technology has been studied for decades.¹



Federal Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization

The vaccines that we have available for use were approved by the FDA for emergency use. The vaccines were developed quickly because we cut red tape (bureaucracy), not corners. The vaccine trials did not bypass any safety precautions. Every study, every phase, every trial was reviewed by the FDA. Some steps were able to be completed at the same time instead of consecutively. All approved COVID-19 vaccines have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same safety standards as other vaccines.²

Safety Systems

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and FDA continually watch for any adverse events through safety monitoring systems to ensure that the vaccines remain safe over time.

- COVID-19 Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting: CDC and FDA national early warning system to detect possible safety problems for all U.S. vaccines. Healthcare providers are required to report adverse events and community members are able to do the same regarding personal experience.

Website: <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

- CDC V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker: free, smartphone-based tool that provides personalized health check-ins after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

Sources

1. CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html>

2. FDA Safety & Effectiveness Data, <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/learn-more-about-covid-19-vaccines-fda>