

EMPLOYEE HEALTH MATTERS

DEBUNKING COVID-19 VACCINE MYTHS

THE VIRUS, NOT THE VACCINE, IS THE ENEMY

Myths are common when new vaccines come on the market. Instead of focusing on the positive truth that dangerous illnesses can be wiped out, myths based on fear and a lack of knowledge can cause people to reject safe and effective vaccines. These myths and facts will help clear up false information.

AMERICAN COVID-19 INCIDENCE AND DEATH:

- ▶ Over 32 million have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- ▶ Over 580,000 have died



AMERICAN COVID-19 VACCINATION IMPACT:

- ▶ The US has given over 260 million doses (as of May 10, 2021). Of those vaccinated, fewer than 6,000 people have contracted the virus. This represents just 0.007% of the 84 million Americans with full protection against the virus.
- ▶ CDC and FDA recommend that women younger than age 50 be aware of the rare risk of blood clots with low platelets after vaccination with Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine. Read more [here](#).



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 10, 2021

COMMON COVID-19 VACCINE MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTH Vaccines don't work.

FACT Vaccines work. Smallpox, polio, diphtheria, mumps, measles and rubella have nearly been eliminated in the US through vaccination. More recently, the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine has been proven to protect against infection in about 90% of young women. Most important, all of the approved COVID-19 vaccines have been found to be 100% effective in preventing severe disease, hospitalizations and death.

MYTH The COVID-19 vaccine was developed too quickly to be safe.

FACT Work on these vaccines relies on deep research and technology that began decades ago. Development and approval were sped up due to the COVID-19 public health crisis. In the past year, governments, businesses and scientists from around the world worked closely together to shorten the timeline without compromising safety. Clinical trials met strict safety standards.

MYTH The vaccine won't prevent COVID-19.

FACT Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are 95% effective in preventing COVID-19 illness; Johnson and Johnson's vaccine is 72% effective, but has an 85% effectiveness rate in preventing severe cases. All three vaccines have been 100% effective in preventing hospitalizations from COVID-19.

MYTH I can get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

FACT It is medically impossible to get COVID-19 from a vaccine. There are no live viruses in the vaccines, so they cannot infect anyone. All vaccines cause the body to make proteins that prevent infection. Those vaccinated may experience a range of side effects, indicating the vaccine is building immunity.

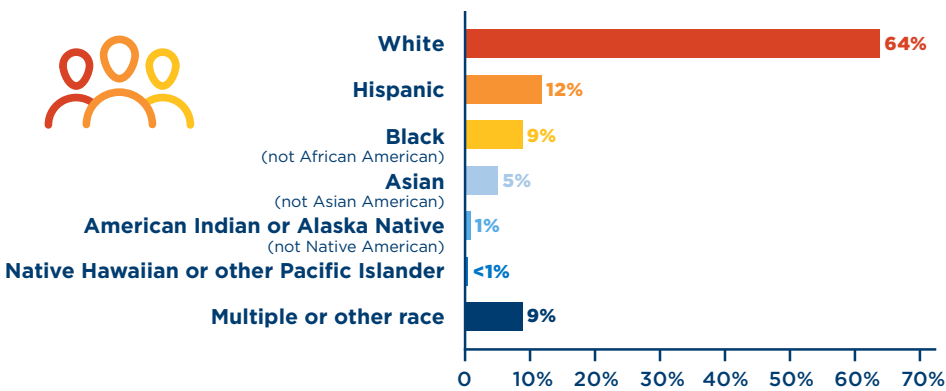
MYTH The chances of getting COVID-19 aren't high enough for me to risk a vaccine.

FACT It is true that the risk of dying from COVID-19 varies by age and health factors, but no one has been immune to getting or dying from the virus. We will only achieve "herd immunity" if 70%–80% of Americans become vaccinated. The Kaiser Foundation estimates that 90 million US adults are at risk of serious complications, so when you get vaccinated, you are also protecting those around you.

MYTH Vaccine side effects are harmful.

FACT The CDC reported mild to moderate reactions to the vaccine, including pain at the injection site, fatigue, headaches, muscle aches, and chills. All reactions subside within 48 hours and have no long-term complications. The risks of COVID-19 are much greater than any reaction to the vaccine.

Vaccination Rates by Race/Ethnicity



Note: As of April 19, 2021, CDC reported by race/ethnicity was known for 55% of people who had received at least one dose of the vaccine.

Source: KFF, April 21, 2021

MYTH **The vaccine is harmful to communities of color.**

FACT **There is no evidence that the vaccine is harmful or any less effective for communities of color.**

Communities of color were well-represented in clinical trials for all of the approved COVID-19 vaccines. Unfortunately, vaccination rates for many ethnic groups are lagging behind those for white people.

MYTH **The vaccine causes autism and other conditions.**

FACT **The COVID-19 vaccines do not cause autism, nor do they cause Bell's palsy, miscarriage or infertility—other common myths.**

Some men who have had the virus have been found to have a reduced sperm count, so the vaccine may actually help reduce the risk of infertility. Learn more about infertility myths at bit.ly/3vKfTTh. Safety monitoring and transparency are the most robust they've ever been. A voluntary, confidential smartphone app called V-safe is available from the CDC. It performs regular check-ins with those who have gotten the vaccine so problems can be quickly detected and investigated.

MYTH **I've had COVID-19, so I don't need to get vaccinated.**

FACT **As it is still unknown how long immunity lasts, the CDC**

recommends that those who have had COVID-19 get the vaccine. Initial studies have found that 10% of those who have had the virus lack sufficient immunity to prevent a reoccurrence.

MYTH **The vaccines were developed to control people through microchip tracking or nanotransducers in our brains.**

FACT **There is no microchip in the vaccines**, and there is no means for the vaccines to track people or gather personal data. This rumor may have originated with a video that went viral on social media.

MYTH **People with underlying conditions shouldn't get the vaccine.**

FACT **People who have underlying conditions—like diabetes and heart disease, for example—are at a high risk for serious COVID-19 complications**, so it's even more important to get vaccinated.

MYTH **The COVID-19 vaccines alter DNA.**

FACT **COVID-19 vaccines do not interact with DNA.** The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) to protect from COVID-19. mRNA does not interact with a person's RNA or DNA because the mRNA does not enter the center of the cell, where DNA resides.

MYTH **Once I get vaccinated, I don't have to wear a mask or practice social distancing.**

FACT **Once vaccinated, until instructed otherwise by the CDC, people are advised to wear a mask and social distance in public settings.** Because the vaccines are not 100% effective, a vaccinated person has a slight chance of getting COVID-19 and infecting another person without experiencing symptoms.

MYTH **Current vaccines won't work against new COVID variants.**

FACT **While variants present challenges, current vaccines appear to be highly effective against them. Vaccines prevent the chance of a variant developing that will not respond to vaccines.**



COVID-19 Immunization Videos

These videos are endorsed by the CDC, a panel of independent doctors, and other health professionals.

- ▶ **Myths and Facts**
(one-minute videos)
- ▶ **COVID-19 VACCINE: Get the Facts**
(no translation)
- ▶ **COVID-19 VACCINE: Get the Facts**
(Spanish subtitles)
- ▶ **The History of Vaccines**
(no translation)
- ▶ **The History of Vaccines**
(Spanish subtitles)
- ▶ **Trusting Vaccines**
(no translation)
- ▶ **Trusting Vaccines**
(Spanish subtitles)

