



COVID-19 VACCINE

FACTS

IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Correctional facilities (e.g., jails, prisons) have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Safe and effective vaccines are now available for people who are incarcerated.

The goal of vaccinating all Minnesotans is to stop COVID-19. This includes people who are currently incarcerated. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is one of the most important steps someone can take to protect themselves. With more people vaccinated, there will be less COVID-19 disease.

It is normal to have some concerns and questions about a new vaccine, especially in communities that are often left out of medical benefits and experience ongoing and historical racism, medical trauma, and abuse. Here are the facts on COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and they work.

The COVID-19 vaccines are made like other vaccines. No safety steps were skipped when making the COVID-19 vaccines. All COVID-19 vaccines were studied with tens of thousands of volunteers of different ages, races, ethnicities, and medical histories to make sure they are safe and work.

The vaccines were made faster because we were able to use research done over the last 20 years to get started and some steps in the process happened at the same time. The federal government put a lot of money toward COVID-19 vaccine development. The funding let medical researchers focus on both developing the vaccines and making large amounts of the vaccines at the same time. This way, these safe and effective vaccines could be used right away. Researchers made sure to show that the vaccines work and are safe for people from many different communities and backgrounds. Three vaccines are available: Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and Moderna. You can ask what vaccine your facility is using.

People who are pregnant, or who would like to have a baby someday, can get the COVID-19 vaccine. People who are pregnant can talk to medical before getting the vaccine, especially if they have questions.

COVID-19 vaccines protect against COVID-19 disease.

Like other vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines help bodies build up protection against the virus without someone having to get COVID-19.

Two of the COVID-19 vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna, are called mRNA vaccines. The mRNA (messenger RNA) in these vaccines is genetic material that gives the body instructions to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19 disease. Another COVID-19 vaccine, Johnson & Johnson, uses a weakened common cold virus to help the body recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19 disease. No COVID-19 virus is in any of the vaccines. The vaccine cannot give someone COVID-19 disease. The COVID-19 vaccines cannot change someone's genetic makeup (DNA).

We are still learning about new variants of COVID-19. While the COVID-19 vaccines may not work as well against some of the variant strains, experts think the vaccines will still offer some protection against most COVID-19 variants.

Right now, we do not know if this will be a vaccine that people need to get again, like needing a tetanus shot every 10 years or getting a flu shot every year.

SIDE EFFECTS

Some side effects are common after vaccination. They mean the body is responding to the vaccine (it is also OK if someone has no side effects at all). You may have:



• SORE ARM



• MUSCLE ACHES



• TIREDNESS



• HEADACHE



• FEVER/CHILLS

Side effects are mild compared to getting COVID-19.

VACCINE FACTS

- COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone.
- The COVID-19 vaccines offered in correctional facilities are the same vaccines given in the community.
- COVID-19 vaccines do not contain microchips, fetal tissue, pork products, eggs, or preservatives.

What if I already had COVID-19?

Even if someone already had COVID-19, it is possible to get sick again after a few months. If someone is sick, they could spread the disease to people around them.

After vaccination:

Second doses

Some COVID-19 vaccines require one dose, and some require two doses. The person giving the vaccine will let you know which vaccine you are getting. If someone needs two doses, it is very important that they get both doses, so the vaccine works best.

If someone is released before the second COVID-19 vaccine dose

For COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses, a person needs to get their second shot three or four weeks after the first one. Someone who is released before their second shot can get their second dose out in the community. It must be the same vaccine product as the first dose.

Everyone should get a vaccine card after their first dose that says what vaccine product they got and when they got it. The person who gave the shot will also enter the person's information into Minnesota's immunization information system, so the next person giving the second shot can also look up what the person got. Many places are available to get a COVID-19 vaccine in the community. [Go to COVID-19 Vaccinations \(mn.gov/vaccine\)](https://mn.gov/vaccine) and click "Find My Vaccine" or call 1-833-431-2053 to find places with COVID-19 vaccine.

Wearing masks, distancing, testing, and quarantine

After the final COVID-19 vaccine dose, it takes about two weeks for a body to build up protection. After those two weeks, a fully vaccinated person has good protection against COVID-19. However, we are still learning how vaccines will affect the spread of COVID-19. For now, people who live in group settings (like correctional facilities) and who have been vaccinated still need to wear a mask, stay 6 feet from others when possible, quarantine if exposed to COVID-19, and get tested when needed. It will take time until enough people get the vaccine to stop COVID-19 spread. Until then, we need to keep being careful.