



Thank you for all you are doing to keep your residents and coworkers safe and healthy.

We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely challenging for long term care staff and residents, as well as their loved ones. We care about your health and the health of the residents in your facility and understand that you may have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

For more information, please visit <https://doh.sd.gov/COVID/> or www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/.



Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccines

Continued

Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

No. COVID-19 vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine cause you to be magnetic?

No. Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine will not make you magnetic. COVID-19 vaccines do not contain ingredients that can or would produce an electromagnetic field. All COVID-19 vaccines are free from metals.

What are the ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccines? Do they include microchips or fetal cells?

The active ingredient, or component, in the three FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines is a single-stranded molecule that leads the body to briefly make a protein normally found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. The body recognizes that protein and creates a strong immune response that teaches your immune system to protect against COVID-19. After vaccination, the body breaks down the vaccine components and gets rid of them within about 36 hours.

There are some other components in the vaccines as well, such as lipids and salts that help the vaccines protect you. Importantly, none of the COVID-19 vaccines contain eggs, gelatin, or latex, and they're free from heavy metals. There are no microchips or fetal cells in the vaccines. Vaccination mimics the natural process your body uses every day to produce immune responses to germs in the environment.



600 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD
1-800-997-2880 (COVID Hotline)

revised 08-26-2021

Save Lives. Protect Seniors. Get Vaccinated.

**LONG-TERM CARE STAFF
COVID-19 VACCINE FAQs**



SOUTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[DOH.SD.GOV/COVID/](https://doh.sd.gov/covid/)

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccines

Why is it important that LTCF staff receives COVID-19 vaccine, even if LTCF residents are vaccinated?

COVID-19 can cause serious illness or even death. There's no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine greatly reduces the risk that you'll develop COVID-19. The vaccines prevent nearly 100% of hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19.

The decision to get vaccinated protects more than just your health. It can also help protect your colleagues, facility residents, families, and communities.

How can I know the vaccines are safe and effective if they have only been authorized for emergency use?

The FDA has authorized the use of three vaccines (*Pfizer has been granted full FDA approval for those 16 years and older*) in response to the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency use authorizations get vaccines distributed faster than the formal FDA approval process without skipping any mandatory safety checks. Large clinical trials demonstrated that the vaccines were safe and effective, and real-world experience has confirmed those findings.

Your risk for serious health problems is much lower from the vaccine than your risk if you're unvaccinated and get COVID-19. COVID-19 can leave you with heart and lung damage and other conditions that require long-term treatment. Vaccines are much safer paths to immunity than the disease itself.

Why should I get vaccinated if I can still get infected with COVID-19?

It's important to understand that infection doesn't necessarily lead to illness. If you're fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the virus manages to enter your body and begins to multiply—that is, infect you—your immune system will be prepared to quickly recognize the virus and keep it from doing real damage. That's

why most people who get infected with COVID-19 despite being vaccinated—so-called breakthrough cases—have no symptoms (asymptomatic) or only mild-to-moderate illness.

Nearly everyone in the United States who is getting severely ill, needing hospitalization, and dying from COVID-19 is unvaccinated.

Will the COVID-19 vaccine prevent me from infecting others?

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the likelihood that you'll develop and be able to spread COVID-19. In rare occasions, some vaccinated people can get COVID-19 from the highly contagious Delta variant and spread it to others. Importantly, only a very small amount of spread happening around the country comes from vaccinated individuals.

Do the vaccines work on COVID variants?

Scientists continue to study different forms, or variants, of the virus that causes COVID-19 to see if the vaccines will work against them. Current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines authorized and recommended for use in the United States offer protection against most variants, including the highly contagious Delta variant. For this reason, COVID-19 vaccines are an essential tool to protect people against COVID-19, including illness caused by the new variants. CDC will continue to monitor the impact these new variants may have on how well the vaccines work.

Do COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility?

No, they do not. There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause fertility problems, in women or men. If you are trying to become pregnant now or want to get pregnant in the future, you can and should receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Are the vaccines safe for people who are currently pregnant or breastfeeding?

Yes, vaccines are safe for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended

for all people 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future.

There is no evidence of miscarriages, stillbirths, or preterm births linked to the vaccines.

In fact, getting vaccinated is especially important for pregnant people who have a higher risk of complications from COVID-19. Additionally, a recent study found antibodies against COVID-19 in babies born to vaccinated people, which might help protect the babies. And recent reports indicate that vaccinated breastfeeding people have antibodies in their breast milk, which may also help protect their babies.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19. Some people do experience short-term side effects for a few days after vaccination, such as chills, tiredness, headache, and soreness at the injection site. These side effects are normal and are signs that the vaccine is working. They should go away within a few days.

Do COVID-19 vaccines cause long-term health effects?

More than 340 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been given in the U.S. between December 2020 and July 2021. No long-term side effects have been detected. Even a mild case of COVID-19, however, can leave you with symptoms for months, including difficulty breathing, brain fog, and headaches – a condition called “long COVID.”

Do I still need to wear PPE after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

You should continue to take all necessary precautions after getting the vaccine, including wearing personal protective equipment and conducting regular testing. This will continue to keep residents and staff safe.