

## COVID-19 Vaccine Messaging

Updated: March 23, 2021

### Key Messages

- Vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson are currently approved by FDA for Emergency Use Authorization.
- Information gathered in large-scale clinical trials and thoroughly reviewed by scientists at the FDA shows the vaccines are safe and effective and extremely effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death from COVID-19.
- The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses for maximum protection, so people will need to get a second dose of the same vaccine three to six (Pfizer) or four to six (Moderna) weeks later.
- The Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one dose.
- The vaccine will be provided free of charge to anyone who wants it. For people with insurance, insurance will cover any fee to administer it by the provider. People without insurance won't be charged.
- Effective March 29, the [Texas Department of State Health Services](#) opened vaccine eligibility to all adults.
- Learn about new appointment opportunities through email, text message, voice call, or mobile app push notification by registering for the HoustonRecovers subscription of AlertHouston at [AlertHouston.org](#).
- People age 60 and older who need registration assistance can call 832-393-4301, people with disabilities can call 832-393-5500, and anyone else can call 832-393-4220.
- As vaccine availability increases in 2021, people will be able to get vaccinated at doctor's offices, pharmacies, hospitals and other "usual" sites.
- **Take Your Best Shot at ending the pandemic by taking the first vaccine available to you.**
- Even when vaccines are available, people will need to take precautions like masking up, and practicing social distancing as people get vaccinated and we learn more about the immunity produced by the vaccines.

### Vaccine Information

- Pfizer and Moderna announced trial results that suggest their vaccines are 94 percent or more effective. View FDA's fact sheets: [Pfizer](#) | [Moderna](#).
- Johnson & Johnson have announced trial results that suggest its vaccine is over 66 percent effective. [View J&J FDA Fact Sheet](#).
- The vaccines are not interchangeable. For two-dose vaccines, a person must receive two doses of the same vaccine to ensure maximum effectiveness.
- Pfizer's second dose is recommended 21 days after the first and Moderna's second dose is recommended 28 days after the first dose.



- CDC guidance says second doses and be administered up to 42 days after the first and there is no reason to restart the series if the second dose is administered later.
- CDC recommends that the vaccine be offered to people regardless of whether they have a history of COVID-19 infection.
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women should discuss their options with their health care provider.
- If you get a COVID-19 vaccine, wait at least 14 days before getting any other vaccine, including those for flu or shingles. If you get another vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccine.
- Delay vaccination for at least 90 days if you received a passive antibody therapy (monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma) as part of COVID-19 treatment.
- Vaccine is given as an injection into the muscle in a series of two doses given three weeks apart (Pfizer) or four weeks apart (Moderna); or as a single-dose (Johnson & Johnson).
- Recipients will get a vaccination card showing which vaccine and lot number they received and when (if) they should return for a second dose.
- AstraZeneca has a vaccine still in development.
- Each vaccine candidate has different storage and dosage requirements:

Vaccine Candidate	Shipping & Storage Temps	Dose & Interval
Pfizer	Ultra-cold frozen (-70°C), 5 days refrigerated	Two doses three weeks apart
Moderna	Frozen, 30 days refrigerated	Two doses, four weeks apart
Johnson & Johnson	Frozen (-20°C), 3 months refrigerated	Single dose
AstraZeneca	Refrigerated	Two doses, four weeks apart

### Safety and Efficacy

- Vaccines are cleared for Emergency Use Authorization after rigorous review by FDA based on scientific evidence about safety and effectiveness gathered through large clinical trials.
- View the FDA's [Path for a COVID-19 Vaccine from Research to Emergency Use Authorization](#) for more details on the FDA's approval process.
- Side effects may include fatigue, headache, fever, chills, nausea, muscle pain and joint pain. These side effects show that the vaccine is working and resolve within a day or two.
- Vaccine recipients should be monitored for at least 15 minutes for a more serious allergic reaction. People who have a history of allergic reactions should be monitored for 30 minutes.

### CDC Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People



- People are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two weeks after second shot of Pfizer or Moderna or two weeks after the single shot of Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- According to [new CDC guidance](#), fully vaccinated people can:
  - Visit other fully vaccinated people inside without masks or social distancing.
  - Visit with unvaccinated people from a single home who are low risk for severe COVID-19 indoors without masks or physical distancing.
  - Refrain from quarantine/testing if exposed to infected person .
- For now, fully vaccinated people should:
  - Wear masks and social distance in public places.
  - Wear masks, social distance around people who are at higher risk for severe illness or who have a family member that's higher risk.
  - Wear mask and social distance around people from multiple households.
  - Avoid medium and large gatherings.
  - Get tested if you experience symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Follow employers guidelines.

### Houston Health Department

- **Second Doses:**
  - The Houston Health Department is reaching out by text message and email with information to schedule second doses of COVID-19 vaccine. The messages contain a survey link for people to self-register for a second dose appointment.
  - The messages are sent 24-48 hours before Moderna's 28-day recommended due date. Please only call if you have not received a message within that timeframe.
  - People with internet or technology challenges and those who don't receive a message should contact the COVID-19 call center at 832-393-4220.
  - If contact information has changed since a person received their first dose from the health department, please alert the call center.
- **Access & Equity**
  - The Houston Health Department's access & equity strategy includes providing vaccine at:
    - Mass vaccination sites such as Bayou City Event Center, Delmar Stadium, The Parking Spot, and NRG Park.
    - Multi-service centers and health centers.
    - Trusted community clinics, pharmacies and other organizations. Examples include Harris Health's facilities such as MLK Health Center, Gulfgate Health Center, El Franco Lee Health Center and Settegast Health Center; Federal Qualified Health Centers including Ibn Sina and Hope Clinic; UMMC; Kroger and Walgreens, Mexican Consulate and others.
  - As supply increases, the department anticipates deploying mobile strike teams into vulnerable communities and increasing vaccine administration sites and providers.

## End of Texas Mask Mandate

- The State of Texas ended the statewide mask mandate on March 10, 2021 and allowed businesses to re-open at 100% capacity.
- Business owners can determine if masks are still required on their properties.
- City of Houston facilities continue to require masks.
- The Houston Health Department encourages people to continue to wear masks in public until more people are vaccinated.

