COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs - Members
Molina Healthcare of Washington
(Medicaid, Marketplace, Medicare)
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QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. When will a COVID-19 vaccine become available?	COVID-19 vaccines are currently available in Washington State for everyone 6 months and older.
2. Why is the COVID-19 vaccine going through research and testing so much faster than other vaccines?	Scientists have used a decade of vaccine research to rapidly develop the vaccine for COVID-19. Since we're in a pandemic, developing a new vaccine can go faster than normal. No steps were skipped, but some steps happened at the same time such as applications, trials, and manufacturing. Pfizer's COMIRNATY is the first COVID-19 vaccine to receive FDA approval as of Aug. 2021 for use for age 16 and above to prevent COVID-19. Pfizer vaccine is approved as EUA for the following age groups 12-15 years, 5-11 years, and 6 months - 4 years. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved COVID-19 vaccines for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) developed by two manufacturers (Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson). An EUA allows the FDA to make a product available during a declared state of emergency before it has a full license. The Moderna vaccine is approved for ages 6 months and older and J&J has been approved for ages 18+.
3. Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?	Yes, the vaccine is safe. The FDA has a process for ensuring that all vaccines are safe before they can be used in the United States. This process includes clinical trials and approval for both safety and effectiveness. All vaccines made available have undergone clinical trials and approval for both safety and effectiveness.
4. What is the minimum age to get the vaccine?	The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older should get the COVID-19 vaccination as widespread vaccination is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic. Both Pfizer & Moderna vaccines are now authorized for children 6 months and older.

5. Is parent or guardian consent needed for minors to get vaccinated?	Yes. People 6 months - 17 years of age may need consent from a parent or guardian to get the vaccine unless they are legally emancipated. You will need to check with the vaccine clinic about their requirements for showing proof of consent from a parent/guardian or legal emancipation.
6. Can I get my routine vaccinations when getting my COVID-19 vaccine?	Administration of the flu shot at the time of COVID-19 vaccination is considered by CDC as safe and effective. If you have any concerns related to co-administration of your vaccines with the COVID-19 vaccine, please consult with your primary care provider and/or pharmacist.
7. Where can I get a vaccine or booster shot?	The following websites have helpful information and tools to help you find out where to get a vaccine: • vaccinefinder.org • vaccines.gov/get-vaccinated/where • vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov You can also learn more from health care providers, state and local health agencies, pharmacies, through public announcements, and traditional and social media sources. If you have questions as to where to get the vaccine you can also call your provider or local pharmacy.
8. How can someone get a COVID-19 vaccine if they are homebound?	The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) can connect you to available mobile vaccine teams. Fill out a secure online form or call the state's COVID-19 hotline for assistance 1-833-VAX-HELP (833-829-4357). Language assistance is available.
9. If I am pregnant, can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?	Yes. The CDC recommends that pregnant women get vaccinated for the coronavirus. Due to the way COVID-19 shots work, experts don't think there is a risk for pregnant people. There aren't a lot of studies conducted with pregnant people. However, to date they have not found any safety concerns for pregnant people. Clinical studies looking at the safety and how well the shot works in pregnant people are being done now and more are planned.
	You should speak to your health care provider if you have questions about getting vaccinated.

10. If I am nursing my baby, can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?	Yes. Although nursing mothers were not involved in the studies, experts think that a COVID-19 vaccine should be given to nursing moms who are able to take the vaccine. The benefits of getting the vaccine are thought to outweigh the risks of not getting the vaccine. You do not need to stop nursing to get the COVID-19 vaccine. You can keep breastfeeding after you get the COVID-19 vaccine. Please ask your doctor specific questions.
11. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I've had an allergic reaction to a vaccine in the past?	The vaccine should not be given to people with a known history of severe allergic reaction such as anaphylaxis to any ingredient in the COVID-19 vaccine.

There have been reports of anaphylactic reactions in persons receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. These reports are being further investigated, but in the meantime the CDC recommends that people who have had a history of severe allergic reaction to any other vaccine or injectable therapy (e.g. intramuscular, intravenous, or subcutaneous), or allergy to any ingredient in the COVID-19 vaccine, should complete a risk assessment with a health care provider to determine if the vaccine is right for them. |
12. How much will the vaccine cost?	There is no cost for the COVID-19 vaccine.
13. Will the COVID-19 vaccine be mandatory?	No. It will be your choice whether to get the vaccine. Washington State is not currently considering any mandates for the vaccine, but employers could require it. Please talk to your doctor or clinic if you have questions or concerns.
14. Who is in charge of distributing the vaccine?	The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and local public health agencies are responsible for the vaccine distribution process. The specific details for how and when people can get the vaccine may be different in each county. Check your local health district website for details.
15. How many doses are needed to be effective?	The Pfizer vaccine is a two-dose vaccine, given 3-8 weeks apart for ages 5 and above. For 6 months-4 years, it is 3 doses, with the 2nd dose 3-8 weeks after 1st dose and 3rd dose at least 8 weeks after the 2nd dose.
The Moderna vaccine is a two-dose vaccine, given 4-8 weeks apart for ages 6 months and above. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a one-dose vaccine.

	The CDC recommends that moderately to severely immunocompromised people receive an additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine to achieve the needed immunity. Please reference the CDC guidelines for recommended primary series doses based on age groups ([CDC Link](#))
16. If two or three doses of the primary series are required, do the additional doses need to be the same supply manufacturer?	Yes. The second and third vaccine doses you receive in the primary series need to be from the SAME supply manufacturer. So, you will either receive 2 doses of the Pfizer vaccine (*unless 6 months – 4 years, 3 doses*) or 2 doses of the Moderna vaccine. It is recommended that patients request a completed COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card for your personal records when you get your first dose. The card should include information such as: the vaccine manufacturer, lot number, date of first dose, and the due date of the second dose.
17. How will I know when to receive a second dose?	Please make the appointment for the second dose at the time of the first dose. Although you should get a COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card, it is best to also mark the date on your personal calendar and set a reminder on your phone.
18. How will my health care provider know which vaccine manufacturer to use for my 2nd dose?	Your provider can look up the information in the [CDC's Immunization Information Systems (IIS)](#) website. The CDC requires that vaccination providers enrolled in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program report vaccine data to the CDC within 24 hours of administering a dose. This information includes the vaccine manufacturer. The IIS is a lifetime registry that keeps track of immunization records for people of all ages.
19. Will I need a booster shot? Can I mix and match my booster shot?	Booster doses are recommended for those 5 years and older who have completed their primary vaccination series. ([Additional Information on eligibility](#)) The CDC recommends that everyone 5 years and older who received the Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccine primary series get a booster dose. A 2nd Booster is recommended for adults ages 50 years and older and those 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, at least 4 months after their first. Please reference the CDC guidelines for recommended booster doses based on age groups and vaccine manufacturer ([Booster CDC Link](#)) According to the CDC "mixing and matching" your booster shot is safe and effective. Your booster shot does not have to be of the same vaccine type

as your primary vaccine series.

- If you got the Pfizer vaccine: You should wait five months or more after your final dose to get your booster. Choose between either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 Booster.

- If you got the Moderna vaccine: You should wait five months or more after your final dose to get your booster. Choose between either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 Booster.

- If you got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine: You should get a booster dose two months after your first dose. Choose between either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 Booster.

20. What are possible side effects of receiving the vaccine?	During the FDA's review and approval process, safety and effectiveness are evaluated. After getting vaccinated, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness, and/or headache. Most side effects are generally mild and lasts a few days.

21. How do I report if I have a problem or bad reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?	The CDC and FDA encourage the public to report possible side effects to a national data collection site called, Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Learn about the difference between a vaccine side effect and an adverse event. Also, health care providers will be required to report certain adverse events to VAERS as well. Additionally, the CDC is implementing a new smartphone-based tool called v-safe to check in on people's health after they receive a COVID-19 vaccine. When you receive your vaccine, you should also receive a v-safe information sheet telling you how to enroll in v-safe. Enrollment is optional and you can opt out at any time. V-safe uses text messaging and web surveys to check-in with vaccine recipients after the vaccination. It enables participants to report side effects and health impact events after COVID-19 vaccination. V-safe will also remind you to get your second COVID-19 dose. Your participation in v-safe makes a difference - it helps keep COVID-19 vaccines safe.
22. How will the COVID-19 vaccine work in my body?	The COVID-19 vaccine teaches your immune system to recognize the coronavirus. When you get the vaccine, your immune system makes antibodies ("fighter cells") that stay in your blood and protect you in case you are infected with the virus. So, you get protection against the disease without having to get sick. Resource: Washington State Department of Health video on how vaccines work in your body.

23. Can I get the COVID-19 infection directly as a result of receiving the vaccine?	No. The live COVID-19 virus is not present in any vaccine currently available and there is no risk from becoming infected as a direct result of receiving the vaccine. After getting vaccinated, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. The most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. Most side effects are generally mild and last a few days.
24. Does the COVID-19 vaccine cause infertility?	There is no current evidence to support that the vaccine causes infertility.

25. Should I get the vaccine if I have tested positive for COVID-19?	You should get a COVID-19 vaccine even if you already had COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from COVID-19 infection provides added protection against COVID-19. You may consider delaying your vaccine by 3 months from when your symptoms started or, if you had no symptoms, when you received a positive test. People who already had COVID-19 and do not get vaccinated after their recovery are more likely to get COVID-19 again than those who get vaccinated after their recovery. Learn more about the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Please contact your provider if you have questions regarding when you should receive the vaccine.
26. Should I get the vaccine if I have been recently exposed to COVID-19?	If you have been recently exposed to COVID-19, you should wait to get the vaccine until after your quarantine period has ended. However, if there is a high risk you could infect others, you may want to be vaccinated during your quarantine period to prevent spreading the disease. Check first with your provider.
27. I already had COVID-19 and recovered. Do I still need to get a vaccine?	Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the possibility of reinfection, you should be vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19. This is because experts don't yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19.

	If you have COVID-19, you should wait to get vaccinated until you are no longer sick and are not in isolation. Talk to your doctor if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

28. If I am up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations and was exposed to COVID-19, do I need to quarantine?	Per the CDC if you are up to date on COVID-19vaccines and come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 then do the following: • You do not need to stay home unless you develop symptoms but get tested 5 days after your last contact with someone with COVID-19. • Watch for symptoms until 10 days after your last contact • If you develop symptoms, then isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the test results. Wear a well-fitting mask around others. • Take precautions until day 10 and if traveling. Avoid being around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.
29. Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I am vaccinated?	The CDC has issued guidance on what you can do once you become fully vaccinated. For the most updated information, visit the CDC website at Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC The CDC also generally recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases. They include: • Wash your hands often with plain soap and water. The CDC recommends washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, the CDC recommends using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Learn more about safely using hand sanitizer. • Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering or non-surgical mask when around others. Find more information about how to select, wear, and clean your mask.
30. Where can I find support for the high stress and/or depression I am experiencing during the pandemic?	Many people are experiencing higher stress levels, anxiousness, sadness and anger during the pandemic. You are not alone. Help is available, please visit: Washington State Coronavirus Response.

31. Who do I contact if my question was not answered here?	• Email general questions to the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) at mailto:covid.vaccine@doh.wa.gov • Call the Washington's COVID-19 Assistance Hotline at (800) 525-0127 • Visit the DOH web page at: www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/Vaccine • Visit the CDC website at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html • Visit Molina's COVID-19 web page at: www.MolinaHealthcare.com/members-wacovid19

References:

1. www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/Vaccine
1. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/8-things.html
2. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html
3. www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions
4. www.pfizer.com/science/coronavirus/vaccine
5. www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/explaining-operation-warp-speed/index.html
6. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6950e2-H.pdf
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