

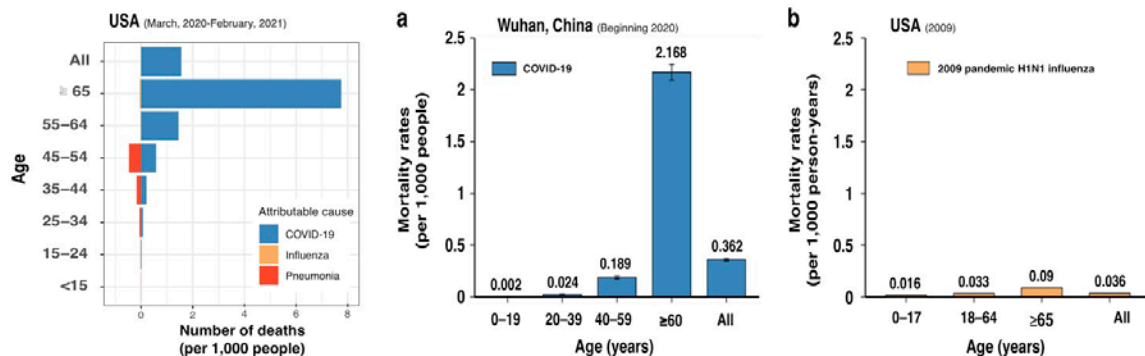
# COVID-19 FAQs

## Isn't COVID-19 the same as a regular flu?

Both COVID-19 (the disease caused by the SARS-Cov-2 virus) and flu (caused by the influenza virus) are airborne diseases, meaning they spread through droplets in the air that people expel, for example, when they breathe, sneeze, or talk. Both diseases can cause severe complications in some people, including pneumonia. They may have similar symptoms: fever or chills, cough, headaches, muscle or body aches, fatigue, although their frequency is different (see the full list of symptoms for flu here: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm>, and for COVID-19 here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>). Some symptoms are particular for COVID-19, like new loss of taste or smell, but it is important to remember that both infections can run unnoticed. A person may have no symptoms at all (asymptomatic), have not developed them yet (pre-symptomatic) or have any combination of symptoms, from light fatigue to a severe difficulty breathing and loss of consciousness. And here start the differences. COVID-19 is more dangerous - the probability of a severe infection and, eventually, death is much larger than that of flu. COVID-19 is also much more transmissible and thus harder to stop.

Why dangerous - People die from the flu every year, but it has never reached the same levels as for COVID-19. In Wuhan (China), where the virus was first recognized, just in the first months (before the strict lock-down) almost 2 out of 5,000 people died of COVID-19 in the general population, and 10 out of 5,000 among people over 60. In US in the last year (even with all the effort) at least 1 in 700 died from COVID-19 (<https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-COVID-19-Death-Counts-by-Sex-Age-and-S/9bhq-hcku> ). For flu, the numbers are orders of magnitude smaller (at most 0.2 every 5,000).

Sometimes COVID-19 numbers may not look big, but to put it in perspective, an average American knows around 600 people, thus, there is a 94% chance that someone you know has not survived the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, almost 0.5% of the entire population has already required hospitalization because of COVID-19, against 4.5-10 every 5,000 usually hospitalized for influenza annually.



Sources: CDC Provisional death counts for COVID-19 ([https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid\\_weekly/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm)) and Yang et al. Disease burden and clinical severity of the first pandemic wave of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China. Nat Commun 11, 5411 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-19238-2>

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Stopping the virus - SARS-CoV-2 is much more transmissible. One infected person can pass the virus to 2.5-3 healthy individuals, while 2009 pandemic flu was transmitted to 1.28-1.46 people on average [<https://bmcinfectdis.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2334-14-480>]. COVID-19 is also very often transmitted without the carrier knowing that he/she is infected. At least 40% of people transmit the virus, but never develop any symptoms, and if they do, 30-60% of transmission happens before symptoms occur. This makes it almost too late trying to stop the transmission after a person is feeling ill. For flu, most of the transmission happens after the symptoms, which makes it much easier to observe and stop.

## **I know the symptoms of COVID-19. I would know if I had it, right?**

COVID-19 is the illness caused by the novel coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. Therefore, having COVID-19 means that you would have symptoms, while being infected with the virus would mean that you can either develop symptoms at some point or feel absolutely fine. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are listed here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html> . If you have doubts you also can use the CDC self-checker tool (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html#>). However, it is important to remember that each person may experience the illness in his/her own way. Some people have all or some of the common symptoms, some people have only minor or rare symptoms that can be mistaken for a different illness (e.g., food poisoning in case of gastrointestinal symptoms). If you are not feeling well, it is important to contact your primary health provider. If you are feeling well, you still need to remember that you can transmit the virus without having any symptoms at all, and, thus, without being aware of it. That is why it is critical that given the possibility you opt for vaccination, mask, do your best to avoid non-essential contacts with people and follow other recommendations of the local and national authorities (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/need-to-know.html> ).

## **The situation is better in summers. Is it safer to have a trip/visit family/friends in summer?**

Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19 independent of the weather or period of the year. A relative decrease of infection activity was indeed observed in some geographic locations during the summer of 2020. However, this change was preceded by extensive measures to prevent the spread of infection. At the moment there is no evidence confirming direct effects of the weather on the risk of getting or transmitting the infection. However, during summer vacations many people have contacts with fewer people outside their households, which slows the spread of infection. Being airborne, with the increase of concentration of droplets in the air the probability of getting infected increases. Following this logic, being outdoors with other people is relatively less risky than being in crowded smaller spaces with no ventilation. But remember that staying home with your household members is much safer. If you absolutely must travel this summer, keep in mind that getting from one place to another is just one piece of the travel risk. Your activities and who you interact with before, during, and after travel may increase your risk. If you are eligible, get fully [vaccinated for COVID-19](#). Wait 2 weeks after getting your second vaccine dose to travel—it takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. Follow the travel-related recommendations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-risk.html> ).

## **What are my risks if I or a loved one get COVID-19?**

The risks of having more severe symptoms typically increase with age and severity of health conditions (like cancer, chronic kidney failure, diabetes, heart conditions, hypertension, etc.). Check here (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>) if you need to be particularly cautious. While the high-risk groups need to be particularly prudent, it

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is important to take care of your physical and mental health even during times of increased social distancing. If a member of your household got sick, it is likely that you have already been infected. Try to avoid personal contacts with people outside your bubble, follow quarantine instructions and protective behavior recommendations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/protect-your-home.html>). You also may want to test for COVID-19, but avoid risking transmitting the virus to other people.

If you or a loved one have symptoms that require medical attention, contact your primary care physician as soon as possible and avoid contact with other people to protect yourself and others. If your loved one has symptoms of COVID-19 follow CDC recommendations on how to care for him/her (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>). Try to implement safety measures when possible (wash hands after being in physical contact with the person or his/her everyday items, mask, increase space ventilation). You may want to temporarily use different rooms if possible.

## **What should I do if I feel sick or know someone is sick?**

If you, or someone you know, have symptoms that require medical attention, contact your primary care physician as soon as possible, and avoid contact with other people to protect yourself and others. If someone you live with or care for has symptoms of COVID-19 follow CDC recommendations on how to care for him/her (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>). Try to implement safety measures when possible (wash hands after being in physical contact with the person or his/her everyday items, mask, increase space ventilation). You may want to temporarily use different rooms if possible. If you or your loved one has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, even if you have no symptoms, it is best to follow quarantine instructions (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>) to protect others from transmitting them the virus, especially if they are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick (older adults, people with underlying medical conditions).

## **Can I get COVID-19 from an animal or a pet?**

We are still learning about the virus, and at the moment there is not enough information to totally rule out transmission from animals to humans. More scientific studies are required. A small number of pets have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. However, the risk of pets spreading it to people is considered low and virus is now spreading from humans to humans.

## **Most of those I saw had light symptoms, why is COVID-19 such a big deal?**

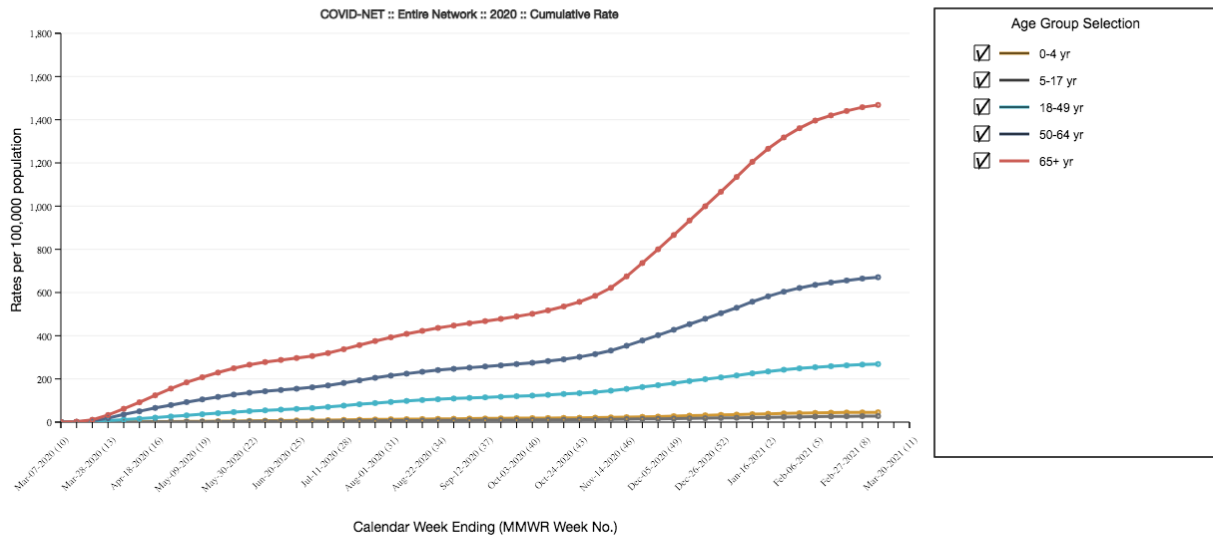
The majority of infected people have indeed light to moderate symptoms if any. The most prevalent symptoms were fever (78%), a cough (57%) and fatigue (31%) (<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0234765>). However, the virus is highly infectious, absolutely new and extremely dangerous for some groups of people. This means that if no interventions (social distancing, masking, vaccination) are made the entire population of the world would get infected, resulting in overburdened hospitals and no possibility to provide care for people with other diseases, millions of deaths, and even more suffering people. More than 1% of previously healthy people already required hospitalization because of COVID-19 in the US, and not more than 20% of the population has been infected by March 2021. It is estimated that 19% of hospitalized patients require non-invasive ventilation, 17% require intensive care, 9% require invasive ventilation. With many hospitalized, not all would be able to receive such care.

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## Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19-Associated Hospitalizations

Preliminary cumulative rates as of Mar 06, 2021



The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network (COVID-NET) conducts population-based surveillance for laboratory-confirmed COVID-19-associated hospitalizations in children (persons younger than 18 years) and adults. The current network covers nearly 100 counties in the 10 Emerging Infections Program (EIP) states (CA, CO, CT, GA, MD, MN, NM, NY, OR, and TN) and four additional states through the Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Project (IA, MI, OH, and UT). The network represents approximately 10% of US population (~32 million people). Cases are identified by reviewing hospital, laboratory, and admission databases and infection control logs for patients hospitalized with a documented positive SARS-CoV-2 test. Data gathered are used to estimate age-specific hospitalization rates on a weekly basis and describe characteristics of persons hospitalized with COVID-19. Laboratory confirmation is dependent on clinician-ordered SARS-CoV-2 testing. Therefore, the unadjusted rates provided are likely to be underestimated as COVID-19-associated hospitalizations can be missed due to test availability and provider or facility testing practices. COVID-NET hospitalization data are preliminary and subject to change as more data become available. In particular, case counts and rates for recent hospital admissions are subject to lag. As data are received each week, prior case counts and rates are updated accordingly. All incidence rates are unadjusted. Please use the following citation when referencing these data: "COVID-NET: COVID-19-Associated Hospitalization Surveillance Network, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. WEBSITE. Accessed on DATE".

## Testing

### Why should I get tested?

There are two different types of tests, giving you different types of knowledge.

A viral, or diagnostic, test looks for current infection, telling you whether you have the virus right now ([https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20\\_COVID-19\\_Testing-Guidance%2010.28.20.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20_COVID-19_Testing-Guidance%2010.28.20.pdf)). Viral test results are like pregnancy tests - they do not give you 100% assurance. There is still a small chance that you have the virus even with negative test results (a so-called false negative). A negative viral test also doesn't mean that you cannot get infected after taking the test. It is important to get tested if you have symptoms or think that you have been or might have been exposed to someone with a virus, so that you can avoid transmitting it to other people, especially those with high risk of severe COVID-19.

There are two types of viral tests:

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- The antigen test (also called the “rapid test”) gives results in as little as 15 minutes. Being faster, it is more likely to give a false negative result. If you have symptoms but get a negative test result from the antigen test, your doctor may give you a molecular test to confirm the results.
- The molecular test (or PCR test) can take up to a week to provide results.

An antibody test is designed to tell you whether you had an infection in the past. If you have had an infection relatively recently (in the last few months), you may have lower risks of getting infected again and developing severe COVID-19.

## **Where can I get tested? Is it free?**

To take a test, contact your health care provider or [local health department](#) (Monroe County Health Department: <https://www.co.monroe.in.us/topic/index.php?topicid=328&structureid=12> ). You can also [find a community testing site](#) in your state, for example at CVS or Walmart. COVID-19 tests are available at no cost nationwide for anyone, independent of what insurance situation you are in, but some eligibility criteria may apply to take a test free of charge (e.g. symptoms, exposure to a positive individual, age over 65, high-risk health conditions or living/working conditions). To make sure you are eligible, check the website of the chosen community test site. Testing at the Optum/LHI sites (<https://lhi.care/covidtesting/>) is now open for anyone who lives or works in Indiana. In most cases registering/booking is necessary to get tested. More on testing can also be found here: 1-877-826-0011 (Indiana State COVID-19 hotline), <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/>

## **Can I test myself at home?**

At-home collection tests are now available by prescription from a doctor, over the counter in a pharmacy or retail store, and through ordering online (an upfront payment may be required if buying without prescription). These tests allow the patient to collect the sample at home and send it directly to the lab for analysis. Some at-home collection tests have a health care provider oversee the sample collection by video with the patient. More information on at-home testing here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/at-home-testing.html>. To check the list of FDA-approved at-home tests search for RT-PCR Home Collection here: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas>

## **What should I do if I cannot book a test?**

Have you checked all the testing sites available in your county? Visit <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2524.htm> to see if any additional sites have become available. If no appointments are available at this moment, contact your health care provider immediately, especially if you believe you may have COVID-19.

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## Preventive measures

### **How can I protect myself?**

The best way to protect yourself and others is to avoid becoming the part of the transmission chain. [Click here for a list of who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine](#). Try to avoid non-essential contacts with people who don't live with you. Mask up, wash your hands or use sanitizer, avoid touching your face, follow social distancing recommendations, avoid crowded places. The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19. More information [here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html).

### **Why do I have to wear a mask?**

SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 spreads through droplets and aerosols that people expel into the air when talking, breathing, coughing and sneezing. If you wear a mask, you first of all protect others from the droplets that come from your mouth and nose. As many people transmit the virus even without knowing they have it, it is important you wear a mask even if you have no symptoms. By wearing a mask, you also protect yourself from the droplets that have been left by others in the air. If both talking people properly wear masks, the probability of either inhaling the virus is significantly lower (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks-protect-you-and-me.html>). For more details on why to wear a mask: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/i-wear-a-mask-because.html>. It is also highly important to know how to wear a mask correctly: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>

### **Which mask works best? Does double masking make any difference?**

[The best protection depends on the mask you use, the way you wear it and whether others wear masks around you \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.htm\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.htm) Any correctly worn mask is better than none. It has been shown that some masks filter better than others (see types of masks recommended for use). For example, NIOSH-Approved N95 respirators are designed to have a particularly tight fit and to filter out at least 95% of airborne particles including large and small particles. However, to ensure such filtration, healthcare personnel is required to do a seal check every time the mask is put on. In fact, CDC does not recommend the use of N95 respirators for protection against COVID-19 in non-healthcare settings. N95 respirators should be reserved for healthcare personnel and for other workers who are required to wear them for protection against other hazards.

There also exist KN95 masks that may be preferable in some situations or for some people – especially for situations that require prolonged close contact with people who do not live in the same household, or for people who are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These masks are supposed to filter at least 95% of particles. However, you need to be careful choosing a supplier of such masks as not all of them provide this level of filtration efficiency. Check evaluated manufacturers [here](#).

If worn properly, a surgical mask is also meant to help block some particles (mostly large-particle droplets, splashes, sprays, or splatter that may contain viruses and bacteria),

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keeping it from reaching your mouth and nose. Surgical masks may also help reduce exposure of your saliva and respiratory secretions to others. While a surgical mask may be effective in blocking splashes and large-particle droplets, a face mask, by design, does not filter or block very small particles in the air that may be transmitted by coughs, sneezes, or certain medical procedures. That is why, it is important to implement other protective measures together with mask wearing.

A cloth mask also offers some protection to you. How well it protects you from breathing in the virus likely depends on the fabrics used and how your mask is made (such as the type of fabric, the number of layers of fabric, and how well the mask fits). There is some evidence that multilayered woven cotton face masks may perform better than their synthetic siblings.

Independently of what mask you chose, it should fit snugly over your mouth and nose. The rule of thumb is: if it becomes a little bit more difficult to breathe (not too much, you still need oxygen) in a mask than without, it means the mask works. See how to improve the level of mask protection. Layering is one of the ways to increase filtering, thus, increasing your protection. That is why putting, for example, a cloth mask over a surgical disposable mask, would be beneficial. But remember to check the fit, as it makes a big difference.

## **I am helping an elderly/impaired person, how can I do it safely?**

Older people and people with certain health conditions are at higher risks of getting seriously ill with COVID-19 or even to pass away because of it. It is especially important to follow all the safety recommendations when you care for an elderly or impaired person. You should always remember to mask and regularly wash your hand or use a sanitizer, you may want to change your clothes or put a covering over them when you come from the outside to care for the person. More information here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

## **Why should my children suffer and miss out on education because of COVID-19?**

Children are less likely to have symptoms and even less often present with severe COVID-19, however they still get infected. They also transmit the virus as much as adults do, whether they have symptoms or not. That is why it is highly important to limit transmission to, from and between children, as they unknowingly contribute to infection of other people, including those with high risk of severe COVID-19 or even death.

## **I am outside and there is no one around me, is it safe to take off the mask?**

The COVID-19 is the disease caused by the spreading of SARS-CoV-2 virus. Transmission happens through droplets and aerosols that infected people leave in the air to pass from one person to another. That is why it is important to keep masks outside your home even if you do not see people currently next to you, especially in the high traffic areas. More information of how COVID-19 spread can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

## **Should I use hand sanitizer when at home?**

Hand sanitizer (with alcohol content of at least 60%) is highly efficient against various bacteria and viruses, but if you are at home and you can wash your hands with soap, it is equally effective.

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More information on hand sanitizers can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/hand-sanitizer.html>. Other measures to protect your home here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/protect-your-home.html>. Follow the instructions here when disinfecting the surfaces and doing laundry: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html#practice>

## **Should I disinfect surfaces and grocery?**

Currently, the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection that causes COVID-19 from food products, food packaging, or bags is considered to be low. However, it is always important to follow good food safety practices. Do NOT use disinfectants designed for hard surfaces, such as bleach or ammonia, on food packaged in cardboard or plastic wrap. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands when organizing and putting away your groceries.

After unpacking groceries, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Regularly clean and disinfect kitchen counters using a product from EPA's List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus (COVID-19). See more recommendations on how to limit risks when you run essential errands: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/essential-goods-services.html>. For the surfaces of your phone which can accumulate significant amounts of germs and viruses, you can use 70 percent isopropyl alcohol wipe. Make sure that the material and color can withstand 70 percent isopropyl alcohol, if you use a cover for your phone.

## **It has been exhausting, when can we go back to normal?**

It has indeed been a very difficult year for all of us. We had to deal with a once in a century pandemic in a highly connected world. However, this virus is highly infectious, dangerous and very good at escaping control measures. It has been estimated that by the end of 2020 not more than 20% had been infected. The virus spreads until it finds people who have no immune response to it, slips in unrecognized and causes mayhem. To have no people naïve to this virus, almost all the population has to get infected or immunized. Luckily, the vaccine rollout has been rapid, and millions of people have been vaccinated in the US and worldwide. However, it will take many months to vaccinate enough people to reach high immunity and suffocate viral spread, until then we need to keep our guards up and keep protecting ourselves and our loved ones.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html>

## **Should I wear gloves outside my house?**

The gloves may give a sense of security when being outside your home but remember that the virus does not enter through the skin, but through your airways or eyes. For example, if you wear gloves when shopping, but still touch your face, the gloves will not make any difference. Gloved hands can still spread germs and viruses (<https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/Glove-use.pdf>). Follow CDC recommendations on wearing gloves: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/gloves.html>. If you prefer to wear gloves, remember to keep your hands away from



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the face and dispose of the gloves or disinfect them with sanitizer after you touched a surface that may have been contaminated (e.g. when you leave the grocery store or pharmacy).

## Vaccine

### **Why vaccinate?**

With COVID-19 vaccines, we're trying to prevent:

- SARS-CoV-2 infection that causes COVID-19
- SARS-CoV-2 transmission
- Severe COVID-19 cases that would require hospitalization or cause either long-term effects or death

Every vaccine available right now is much more effective than no vaccine, and they all significantly reduce the likelihood of severe illness and death. This means that even on the chance that someone gets infected after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, they're less likely to spread it to others and less likely to end up in a hospital's intensive care unit.

The key is: If we can get widespread immunization, we can decrease the amount of virus that's circulating in the community and the suffering it is causing. The more people that are vaccinated, the better the vaccine works in a population.

Getting as much of our population as possible immunized with any FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine will help us reduce the threat of disease, control the pandemic and move forward with our lives.

### **Am I putting myself in danger by getting a vaccine?**

No. All three vaccines currently available in the US have passed the safety checks. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects.

On the arm you had your vaccine common side effects are

- Pain
- Redness
- Swelling

To reduce discomfort:

- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
- Use or exercise your arm.

On your body common side effects are:

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain

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- [Chills](#)
- [Fever](#)
- [Nausea](#)

## To reduce discomfort:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Dress lightly

It is important to remember that certain health changes can occur at any time in life (e.g. blood clots), including after getting a vaccine. It is important to remember that if something feels not right in the next days being vaccinated, it may not necessarily be associated with the vaccine. It is very important that if you are not feeling well you let your health care provider know. You can systematically monitor your condition after getting the vaccine with [v-safe](#).

Ask your vaccination provider about getting started with v-safe: Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose. Learn more about [v-safe](#).

## **Which vaccine is a better one?**

The question of which vaccine is “best” doesn’t have a straightforward answer. Considering the data we have available now as well as available vaccine supply, the vaccine that’s best for you is likely the vaccine that’s available to you. Currently, there are three main types of COVID-19 vaccines that are authorized and safe.

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine both need 2 shots in order to get the most protection. You should get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you [not to get it](#).

You only need 1 shot of the Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine to get the most protection. Learn more about [the different COVID-19 vaccines](#).

It takes time for your body to [build protection after any vaccination](#). People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second shot of the Pfizer-BioNtech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or two weeks after the single-dose J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. You should keep using all the tools available [to protect yourself and others](#) until you are fully vaccinated.

After you are fully vaccinated for COVID-19, you may be able to start doing some things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic. Learn more about what you can do [when you have been fully vaccinated](#).

## **When I can be vaccinated?**

First responders, veterans, educators and people working in healthcare facilities, congregate living facilities for youth, and employees and residents of long-term care facilities are currently eligible for the vaccine in Indiana. People with some health conditions also can receive the vaccine with health care provider recommendation. Age-based groups of general population are regularly added to the eligibility list. [Click here to see if you are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine](#). The list is continuously updated,

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so remember to check it regularly. If you are eligible, [click here](#) or call 211 to register and make an appointment.

## **Where can I get vaccinated?**

Here is [a list of vaccine sites](#) broken down by county and you can click on your county and provider to [schedule an appointment](#).

## **I have got a vaccine, can I go see my children/grandchildren/loved ones now?**

Indoor visits between fully vaccinated people (all needed shots received and 2 weeks has passed since) and unvaccinated people who do not wear masks or physically distance from one another are likely low risk for the vaccinated people.

## **BUT**

Until there is enough vaccine for everyone, it's crucial for you to continue to take all recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

All people, regardless of vaccination status, should adhere to current guidance to [avoid medium- or large-sized in-person gatherings](#) and to follow any applicable local guidance restricting the size of gatherings. If they choose to participate, fully vaccinated people should continue to [adhere to prevention measures that reduce spread](#):

- Wear a mask to protect yourself and others
- Stay at least 6 feet apart (about 2 arm lengths)
- Practice good hand hygiene by washing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer
- Isolate yourself if you're sick and stay home if you've been exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Clean frequently touched surfaces often

The [CDC](#) has issued the following guidelines

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Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

At this point travel is still not advised. Travel increases your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. Delay travel and stay home to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, even if you are vaccinated.

## What should I do if I am not feeling well after the vaccine?

You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects.

On the arm you had your vaccine common side effects are

- Pain
- Redness
- Swelling

To reduce discomfort:

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## When to call the doctor

If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot gets worse after 24 hours

If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site, seek immediate medical care by calling 911. For details on severe allergic [reactions](#).

Ask your vaccination provider about getting started with v-safe to monitor how you feel after getting the vaccine. Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose. Learn more about [v-safe](#).

## **Can I take a paid day off to get vaccinated?**

This depends on your workplace. However the [CDC](#) is encouraging employers to provide easy access to vaccination for all people working at the workplace, regardless of their status as a contractor or temporary employee. The CDC is also encouraging employers to allow employees to get vaccinated during work hours or take paid leave to get vaccinated at a community site.

Also to offer flexible, non-punitive sick leave options (e.g., paid sick leave) for employees with signs and symptoms after vaccination. Whether vaccination is at the workplace or in the community.

So inform your employer if you are eligible to receive the vaccine. [Click here for a list of who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine](#). If you are eligible, [click here](#) to register and make an appointment.