

# What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html>

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects **may feel like flu** and **may even affect your ability** to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

## Common side effects

### On the arm where you got the shot:

- Pain
- Swelling

### Throughout the rest of your body:

- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Headache

## Helpful tips

If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

### To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot:

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

### To reduce discomfort from fever:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Dress lightly.

## When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

## Remember

- Side effects may feel like flu and even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need 2 shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first one, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.
- It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

## HEALTHCARE PROVIDER, PLEASE FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW:

If your temperature is \_\_\_\_°F or \_\_\_\_°C or higher or if you have questions, call your healthcare provider.

Tell your healthcare provider about: \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthcare provider phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Medication (if needed):

Take \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_ hours as needed.

(type and dose or amount)



**Ask your healthcare 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**.

[www.cdc.gov/vsafe](https://www.cdc.gov/vsafe)



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)



# Get vaccinated. Get your smartphone. Get started with v-safe.

## What is v-safe?

**V-safe** is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through **v-safe**, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you. And **v-safe** will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one.

Your participation in CDC's **v-safe** makes a difference—it helps keep COVID-19 vaccines safe.

## How can I participate?

Once you get a COVID-19 vaccine, you can enroll in **v-safe** using your smartphone. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any time. You will receive text messages from **v-safe** around 2pm local time. To opt out, simply text "STOP" when **v-safe** sends you a text message. You can also start **v-safe** again by texting "START."

## How long do v-safe check-ins last?

During the first week after you get your vaccine, **v-safe** will send you a text message each day to ask how you are doing. Then you will get check-in messages once a week for up to 5 weeks. The questions **v-safe** asks should take less than 5 minutes to answer. If you need a second dose of vaccine, **v-safe** will provide a new 6-week check-in process so you can share your second-dose vaccine experience as well. You'll also receive check-ins 3, 6, and 12 months after your final dose of vaccine.

## Is my health information safe?

Yes. Your personal information in **v-safe** is protected so that it stays confidential and private.\*

\*To the extent **v-safe** uses existing information systems managed by CDC, FDA, and other federal agencies, the systems employ strict security measures appropriate for the data's level of sensitivity. These measures comply, where applicable, with the following federal laws, including the Privacy Act of 1974; standards enacted that are consistent with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); the Federal Information Security Management Act, and the Freedom of Information Act.



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 vaccine dose.



Sign up with your smartphone's browser at [vsafe.cdc.gov](https://vsafe.cdc.gov)

OR

Aim your smartphone's camera at this code

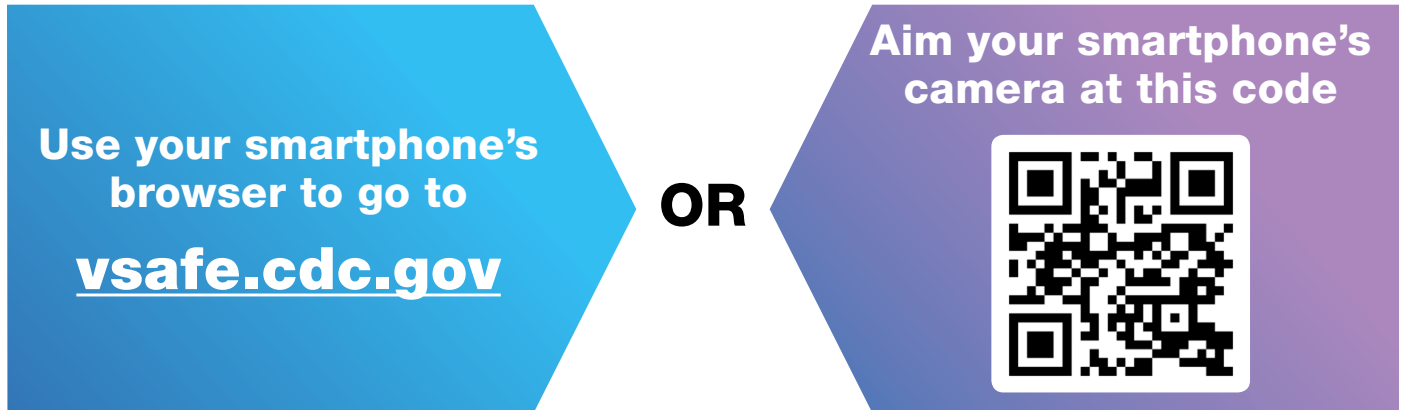


## How to register and use v-safe

You will need your smartphone and information about the COVID-19 vaccine you received. This information can be found on your vaccination record card; if you cannot find your card, please contact your healthcare provider.

### Register

1. Go to the **v-safe** website using one of the two options below:



2. Read the instructions. Click **Get Started**.
3. Enter your name, mobile number, and other requested information. Click **Register**.
4. You will receive a text message with a verification code on your smartphone. Enter the code in **v-safe** and click **Verify**.
5. At the top of the screen, click **Enter your COVID-19 vaccine information**.
6. Select which COVID-19 vaccine you received (found on your vaccination record card; if you cannot find your card, please contact your healthcare provider). Then enter the date you were vaccinated. Click **Next**.
7. Review your vaccine information. If correct, click **Submit**. If not, click **Go Back**.
8. **Congrats! You're all set!** If you complete your registration before 2pm local time, **v-safe** will start your initial health check-in around 2pm that day. If you register after 2pm, **v-safe** will start your initial health check-in immediately after you register — just follow the instructions.

You will receive a reminder text message from **v-safe** when it's time for the next check-in — around 2pm local time. Just click the link in the text message to start the check-in.

### Complete a v-safe health check-in

1. When you receive a **v-safe** check-in text message on your smartphone, click the link when ready.
2. Follow the instructions to complete the check-in.

### Troubleshooting

#### How can I come back and finish a check-in later if I'm interrupted?

- Click the link in the text message reminder to restart and complete your check-in.

#### How do I update my vaccine information after my second COVID-19 vaccine dose?

- **V-safe** will automatically ask you to update your second dose information. Just follow the instructions.

#### Need help with v-safe?

Call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)

TTY 888-232-6348

Open 24 hours, 7 days a week

Visit [www.cdc.gov/vsafe](https://www.cdc.gov/vsafe)



### Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)

The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), is a national program managed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to monitor the safety of all vaccines licensed in the United States. VAERS collects and reviews reports of adverse events that occur after vaccination. An “adverse event” is any health problem or “side effect” that happens after a vaccination. VAERS cannot determine if a vaccine caused an adverse event, but can determine if further investigation is needed.

#### VAERS provides valuable information

VAERS is an early-warning system that detects problems possibly related to vaccines. The system relies on reports from healthcare providers\*, vaccine manufacturers, and the general public. Reporting gives CDC and FDA important information to identify health concerns and ensure vaccines are safe in order to protect the public’s health.

#### VAERS staff evaluate reports of adverse events

VAERS defines a “serious adverse event” as life-threatening illness, hospitalization, prolongation of an existing hospitalization, permanent disability or death. Once adverse events are identified using VAERS, they may be monitored in other immunization safety systems to confirm if a particular adverse event is related to a vaccination and identify any specific risk factors.

#### Anyone can report to VAERS

Anyone can submit a report to VAERS, including patients, family members, healthcare providers, vaccine manufacturers and the general public. CDC and FDA encourage anyone who experiences an adverse event after receiving a vaccine to report to VAERS.

#### How to report to VAERS

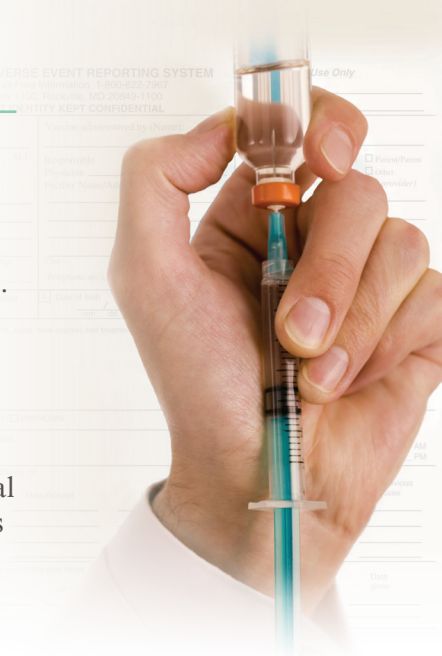
You can report to VAERS online at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/index>.

For further assistance reporting to VAERS, visit <https://vaers.hhs.gov/index> or contact VAERS directly at [info@VAERS.org](mailto:info@VAERS.org) or 1-800-822-7967.

#### VAERS data are available to the public

VAERS data can be downloaded at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/data/index> or searched at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/vaers.html>. Privacy is protected and personal identifying information (such as name, date of birth and address) is removed from the public data.

\*Healthcare providers are encouraged to report all clinically significant adverse events after vaccination to VAERS even if it is uncertain whether the vaccine caused the event. They are also required to report to VAERS adverse events found in the Reportable Events Table (RET) at [https://vaers.hhs.gov/resources/VAERS\\_Table\\_of\\_Reportable\\_Events\\_Following\\_Vaccination.pdf](https://vaers.hhs.gov/resources/VAERS_Table_of_Reportable_Events_Following_Vaccination.pdf)



**For more information about VAERS:**

E-mail: [info@vaers.org](mailto:info@vaers.org)

Phone: 1-800-822-7967

Web site: [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov)

