

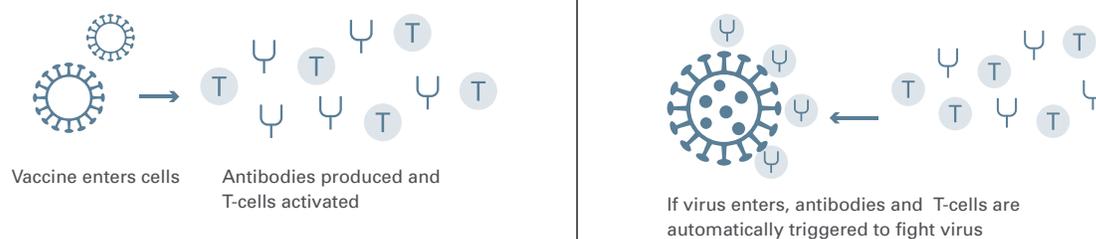
# Dispelling 6 Myths About COVID-19 Vaccines



Content updated  
as of 12/17/20

## MYTH COVID-19 VACCINES CAN GIVE YOU COVID-19.

**REALITY** Vaccines generally work by helping your body develop immunity to a certain germ by mimicking an infection, not actually giving you an infection. The mimicked infection is usually not strong enough to make you sick, but enough that your body detects the signature of the germ and begins creating antibodies to protect you against future infection. Exhibiting side effects is actually a sign that the vaccine is working as intended and eliciting an immune response.



The messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines, created by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, trigger our cells to develop a protein that, in turn, triggers an immune response within our bodies to produce antibodies. Once the antibodies are produced, they help prevent us from getting infected if we come in contact with the real virus. While the mRNA vaccines are new to market, the research behind them has been studied and worked on for decades.

## MYTH THE COVID-19 VACCINES WERE RUSHED AND NOT SAFE.

**REALITY** Vaccine safety standards are not being compromised in efforts to accelerate development and distribution. Efforts at the federal and state levels have been designed to help scientists and funding come together to move vaccine candidates through the process for preclinical and clinical assessment, including animal and human trials. The vaccine process was not sped up by eliminating any clinical steps or efficacy and safety reviews – instead, those steps are occurring simultaneously and with more urgency than during pre-pandemic times.

ACCELERATED PROCESS | TOTAL TIMEFRAME 12-18 MONTHS



TYPICAL PROCESS | TOTAL TIMEFRAME 6+ YEARS



When it's your turn, get the vaccine.

Learn More: [umms.org/vaccine](https://umms.org/vaccine)

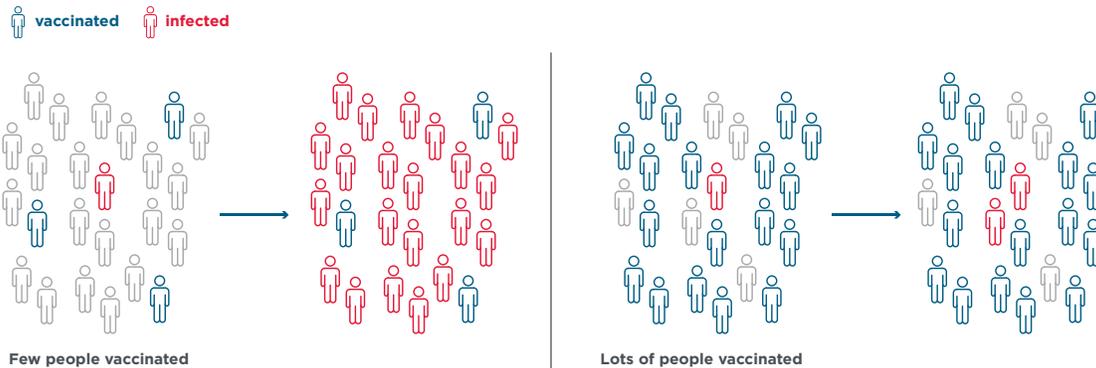


**MYTH MRNA VACCINES WILL ALTER MY DNA.**

**REALITY** mRNA vaccines will never affect or interact with your DNA in any way. The mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 contain a code that essentially teaches our cells to produce harmless spike proteins, which causes our cells to build an immune defense by making antibodies in response. After that process is complete, our immune system knows how to protect against future infection without ever having to introduce the virus into the body through a vaccine. Once the cell has finished using the instructions from the mRNA vaccine, the cells break it down and eliminate the mRNA from our bodies entirely.

**MYTH ONCE I GET THE VACCINE, I WILL NO LONGER NEED TO WEAR A MASK.**

**REALITY** It is currently unknown which vaccines, if any, may protect against transmission because current vaccine trials were not designed to determine transmission. Additionally, a vaccine is only the first step in helping end the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. In order to put an end to the pandemic, we must also have wide distribution of the vaccine and show signs that it's working as expected. Until widespread vaccination has occurred and further transmission studies can be completed, we must also continue to follow social distancing and mask wearing guidelines to continue to curb the spread of COVID-19.



**MYTH PEOPLE WHO ARE PREGNANT/BREASTFEEDING OR HAVE ALLERGIES CANNOT GET THE COVID-19 VACCINE.**

**REALITY** While those who are pregnant/breastfeeding or have allergies may need to take extra precautions, they are not excluded from getting the vaccine at this time. Although pregnant and breastfeeding women did not participate in the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) noted during emergency use authorization that these women may opt in for immunization, if they choose. If you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding, consult your physician to ensure they recommend proceeding with the vaccination.

Similarly, those with a history of severe allergies (like anaphylaxis) or known allergies that require an Epi-Pen should also consult with their physician before being vaccinated to ensure they should proceed with being vaccinated. If either of these situations apply to you and you do not consult with your physician beforehand, the vaccination team will not proceed with vaccination.

**MYTH IF YOU PREVIOUSLY HAD COVID-19, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE VACCINATED.**

**REALITY** Though the duration of protection post-infection is not yet known, the CDC suggests that people with a confirmed prior COVID-19 infection should still be vaccinated when it is available to them. Those with a recent COVID-19 infection (within 90 days) may choose to delay vaccination so those who remain unprotected can be vaccinated first. Ultimately, they should still be vaccinated.