As with all vaccines, safety is a top priority. COVID-19 vaccines were tested in large clinical trials to make sure they meet safety standards.

The available data suggests that after 2 doses, the Moderna vaccine is 94% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19.

It requires two shots given at least 28 days apart.

- The vaccine will be given to you as an injection into the muscle. It requires 2 shots, given at least 28 days apart.
- You need two doses of the same brand of vaccine to be protected.

Side effects are signs that your body is building protection.

- Your arm may be sore, red, or warm to the touch.
- You may experience flu-like symptoms, such as fatigue, headache, chills, muscle pain and joint pain.
- These symptoms usually go away on their own within a few days.

You can put on a cold cloth on the arm to soothe it, if needed. Side effects are more common after the 2nd shot. Call your vaccination provider or your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

Severe allergic reactions are very rare and can include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of your lips, face, and throat
- A fast heartbeat
- A bad rash all over your body
- Dizziness and fainting

If you experience any severe allergic side effects right after the shot, let the nurse know immediately. If this happens later on, call 911 for immediate help. Please note that no severe allergic reactions occurred in the 14,000 trial participants who received the vaccine. As many millions of people will receive these vaccines it is possible that a few will develop allergies.

Keep your vaccination card.

When you receive your first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, you will get a vaccination card as a record of the shot and when to return for your second dose. Remember to bring your card when you return.

COVID-19 vaccines are one of many important tools to help us stop this pandemic. Even after the vaccination, it’s important for everyone to continue to wear a mask, maintain social distancing, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.
Can I get COVID from the shot?
No. The vaccines do not include any virus. They contain only instructions for your cells to make a small part of the virus outer shell. These instructions only last for a few hours before being destroyed in your body.

Is the vaccine only for adults?
People who are 18 years and older can get the Moderna vaccine. It worked well in the elderly as well as in younger adults. Younger people were not included in the initial study, but there are plans to test vaccine safety and effectiveness in that group.

Is the vaccine free?
The COVID-19 vaccine itself is free to all Americans.

Is the COVID-19 vaccination mandatory?
Currently the vaccine is not mandatory, but it may be in the future. Some employers may require staff to get vaccinated. Proof of vaccination for international traveling might also be required.

Should I get the vaccine if I already had COVID?
Yes. However, the CDC is recommending people wait 90 days after a COVID illness. This is because people with recent infections have a very low likelihood of infection. Since there are limited amounts of vaccines, the CDC recommends giving it first to people at highest risk of infection.

Will my COVID test turn positive after getting the COVID vaccine?
You will not test positive for COVID-19 by nasal swab as these test for active infection. However, COVID-19 blood antibody tests may become positive, since the vaccine helps you make these protective antibodies.

Do I need to keep myself away from my family after vaccination?
No. You will not have any "live" virus in your body after the shots. You will not be spreading virus to anyone.

Do I have immunity right after the first dose?
The first shot starts building protection. The second dose increases your immunity to get to the 94% protection level.

How long will I be protected after the shots?
It will take one to two weeks following the second dose for the body to build immunity. Currently, we don’t know how long the protection will last.

I have allergies, can I get the vaccine?
If you have a history of allergies to pollen, food, pets, insects and other things, CDC recommends you can safely get vaccinated. If you have had severe allergic reactions to another vaccine or injectable therapy like hives, swollen lips and face or trouble breathing, talk to your healthcare provider before getting the vaccine.

What if I am pregnant, breastfeeding, or plan to have a child soon?
Based on how the vaccines work, it is most likely safe during pregnancy. In addition, pregnancy increases the risk of more severe COVID-19 illness. If you are pregnant, and have other risks for serious COVID-19, you may benefit from being vaccinated. Talk to your healthcare provider about any concerns.

What if I am immunocompromised or take medication lowering my immunity?
The vaccine is not dangerous for people with weak immune systems. However, we do not know how well it will protect them. Experts recommend that immunocompromised people should plan to get vaccinated unless otherwise contraindicated as there is more benefit than risk. Talk to your healthcare provider about any concerns.