

COVID-19 Public Health and Vaccine Update
January 20, 2021
Jonathan Nasser, MD

References and Additional Reading

1. **New York State Vaccine Eligibility and Scheduling:** <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>
2. **Public Health Recommendations: Testing, Quarantine, Isolation:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
3. **New York State COVID prevalence:** <https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-region-dashboard>
4. **Operation Warp Speed:** <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2027405>
5. **Pfizer-BioNTech Phase 3 Trial:** <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2034577>
6. **Moderna Phase 3 Trial:** <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2035389>

COVID Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What vaccine should I get?**

The safety and efficacy data of the two available vaccines is indistinguishable. You should get whatever vaccine is available to you.

2. **Can I get the vaccine if I have already had COVID?**

Yes, you can and should get the vaccine as the long term immunity after natural infection is unknown. However, it is recommended to wait for 3 months after illness as most are immune during this period.

3. **I get sick every time I get a flu shot. Can I get the COVID vaccine?**

Yes. There is no relationship between flu shot symptoms and the COVID vaccine. As an aside, you cannot catch the flu from the flu shot but some people develop achiness and fatigue afterwards. These are also symptoms that can occur after the COVID vaccine.

4. **What if I have had another vaccine recently?**

It is recommended to wait 2 weeks after another vaccine prior to getting the COVID vaccine.

5. **Can I get the COVID vaccine if I have a history of food allergies or other allergic reactions?**

Yes, but the observation period after injection should be increased from 15 to 30 minutes. The only contraindication would be a past history of an allergic reaction to the COVID vaccine.

6. Can I get the COVID vaccine if I am immunocompromised?

Yes

7. How important is the 3 or 4 week interval between COVID mRNA vaccines?

The phase 3 trials for these vaccines followed a careful interval between doses. For other vaccines, dosing intervals represent a minimum but subsequent doses can be given longer than the recommended time period. The efficacy of COVID vaccine with a delayed second dose is not known.

8. Will I need a COVID vaccine every year?

Initial data suggests that the vaccine provides immunity for a prolonged period but it is not known at this time whether individuals will need a yearly dose. Stay tuned.

9. Is it safe for me to resume normal activities after I've been vaccinated?

While your risk of acquiring serious illness related to COVID infection will be dramatically reduced, you may still be a carrier and infect others. Normal activities are dependent on widespread vaccination.