THRIVE UNITED 365

YOUR COVID-19 INFORMATION PACKET

Visit this page often for the most up-to-date information on keeping yourself and others safe from COVID-19. Remember that the best way to stop the spread and stay healthy is to:

1. Get vaccinated and stay up to date on recommended booster doses, as eligible.
2. Follow current mask guidances.
3. Get tested regularly.
4. Wash your hands.

United Way

United Way of the National Capital Area

How do viruses SPREAD AND CHANGE?

A **virus is a tiny particle** made of genetic material and a protein shell. There are a **lot of different viruses.** They come in different shapes and sizes and they can **infect different cells.**

A virus makes copies of itself to spread

- Viruses cannot live on their own. They survive in the cells of living things, which are called **host cells**.
- When a virus gets into a host cell, it starts to **make copies of itself**.
- Then the virus, along with the new copies, exits the host cell and goes on to **attack other host cells**.

Viruses change over time into variants

- When the virus makes copies of itself, **mistakes can happen** that result in a virus that is not exactly the same.
- This changed virus is then copied and a different version of the virus **starts to spread**. This is how a virus can change over time.
- It is **normal and expected** for viruses to constantly change.
- A virus that has changed is called a **variant**. This is what's happening when people talk about new variants of the virus that cause COVID-19.

COVID-19 is a viral infection

A viral infection like COVID-19 can cause people to develop fever, cough or fatigue.

- **People feel ill** when the virus takes over cells in the body to make copies and the body's immune system tries to attack these invaders.
- When **more people are infected** with a virus, more copies of the virus are being made, and that makes it **more likely that the virus will change**.
- That's why it's so **important to get vaccinated** and take steps to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Sign up for your **free** COVID-19 vaccine at **vaccinate.virginia.gov** or call **877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682)**.

VDH Virginia Department of Health

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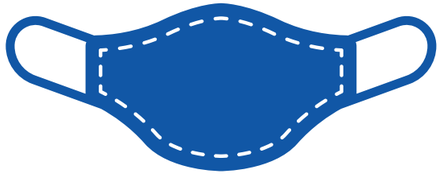
WHAT MASK SHOULD I WEAR?

Along with getting vaccinated and boosted, experts recommend upgrading your mask if you want optimal protection.



No Mask or Improper Use

- Mask should fit over your nose and mouth and be snug against your face with no gaps.
- Don't use masks that are damp, dirty or damaged.
- Don't wear masks with exhalation valves, which allow virus particles to escape.

Cloth Masks

- Washable and reusable.
- Masks should be washed at least once a day or as soon as they become dirty.
- Multiple layers of woven, breathable fabric.

Surgical Masks

- Disposable, intended for one-time use.
- Multiple layers of non-woven material.
- Provides protection against large droplets.

If you don't have access to a high-filtration respirator mask, double up. Single layer masks, such as bandanas and gaiters, are less effective, so wear a cloth mask with multiple layers or wear a cloth mask over a surgical mask. Be sure your mask fits properly—nose wires improve fit.

High Filtration Masks

(Respirators - N95, KN95, KF94)

- Varies by mask type, but reusable up to 5 times with proper care.
- Filters up to 95% of particles in the air.
- Seals tightly to the face when fitted properly (some facial hair can interfere with this seal)
- Designed and regulated to meet international standards. Check lists of trusted manufacturers from CDC and Project N95 to avoid counterfeit masks.

HOW WAS THE COVID-19 VACCINE
developed, approved and manufactured

Vaccines have saved the lives of thousands of American through the years. Now, scientists and researchers have worked to bring us a new vaccine to help in the fight against COVID-19.

EVERY vaccine, no matter what it's for, goes through multiple steps. **For the COVID-19 vaccine, NO STEPS** were skipped. The financial part of the process was sped up to help us fight this virus.

It Starts with Lab Testing

Scientists and researchers work on formulas that will become a vaccine. Before it's ever given to people, it goes through extensive lab testing.

Next Stop is Clinical Trials

Clinical trials test safety, dosage and effectiveness. Vaccines have to pass three phases in this step before they can be offered to the general public. The FDA* sets the rules for this step.

Last, Approval and Production

The FDA reviews the data from the trials and gives the go ahead for manufacturing. The vaccine is made in large quantities for distribution.

Clinical Trials

Volunteers around the country offer to get the vaccine so scientists and medical professionals can see how they are affected.

PHASE 1: Safety

- Evaluate safety and identify any common reactions
- 20 -100 volunteers

PHASE 2: Effectiveness

- Gather more information on safety, efficacy, dosage and reactions
- Several hundreds of volunteers

PHASE 3: Safety + Effectiveness

- Compare reactions of people who got the vaccine versus those who have not
- Thousands of volunteers

A vaccine only gets FDA approval if it tests both SAFE and EFFECTIVE

***Who is the FDA? What does it do?**

A non-political group, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses oversight and regulation to ensure vaccine quality, safety and effectiveness - helping to facilitate the timely development of COVID-19 vaccines.

For more information about how vaccines are created, tested and distributed, visit vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine or call 877-ASK-VDH3.

VDH Virginia Department of Health

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HOW DO VACCINES WORK

Vaccines are an important part of routine healthcare and key to **preventing diseases** that spread from one person to another.

When bacteria or viruses enter our bodies, they attack and multiply. This invasion is called **an infection**. The immune system fights back to protect the body's cells and counterattack the invasion.

Types of COVID-19 Vaccines

1. **mRNA vaccines**
2. **Protein subunit vaccines:** fragments of the COVID-19 virus
3. **Vector vaccines**

- Each COVID-19 vaccine works in a different way.
- All expose the body to material that prompts an immune response.
- The immune system then builds antibodies that can recognize and fight the virus.
- If the real virus enters the body, the immune system is trained and remembers how to respond to prevent COVID-19.

ALL vaccines help keep people SAFE from infections by:

- Imitating an infection
- Helping the body's immune system
- Teaching the body to "remember" how to fight the bacteria or virus in the future

Building Protection to Fight Against COVID-19

After each dose of vaccine, your body might show some signs of the hard work it's doing to build this protection, such as a fever that lasts a short time or a headache. Producing immunity can take a couple of weeks.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit **vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine** or call 877-ASK-VDH3.

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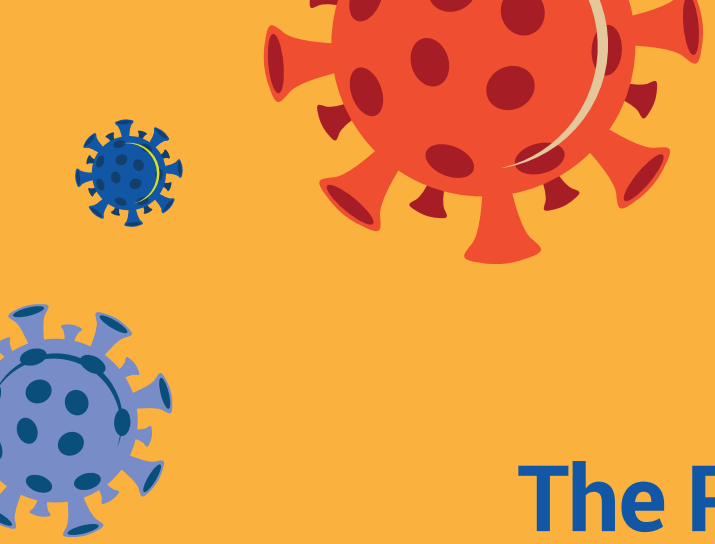


The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines

HAVE CLEARED EVERY LEVEL OF REVIEW

Full approval represents the FDA's highest level of confidence in a drug's safety and effectiveness.

COVID-19 BOOSTER DOSES

The best way to protect yourself from COVID-19, including variants, is to get vaccinated and boosted.

WHO? Everyone ages 12 and older should get a booster.

WHEN? At least 5 months after your second Pfizer or Moderna shot, or 2 months after Johnson & Johnson.

As of 1/5/2022

WHAT'S A BOOSTER SHOT?

For some viruses, the protection you get from a vaccine starts to wear off over time. An additional dose of the vaccine may be needed to boost your immune response and make sure you're protected from the virus.

Boosters are common for many vaccines, like Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis).

As of 9/23/2021

COVID-19 TESTS

Testing helps us to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and should be used alongside our best tools to stop this pandemic– getting vaccinated, getting boosted and wearing a mask in indoor public settings.

HOW TO GET A FREE COVID-19 TEST

Every U.S. household can order up to four free at-home COVID-19 tests.

Tests typically ship in 7-12 days.

Visit covidtests.gov to order.

covidtests.gov

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHILE I WAIT FOR TEST RESULTS?

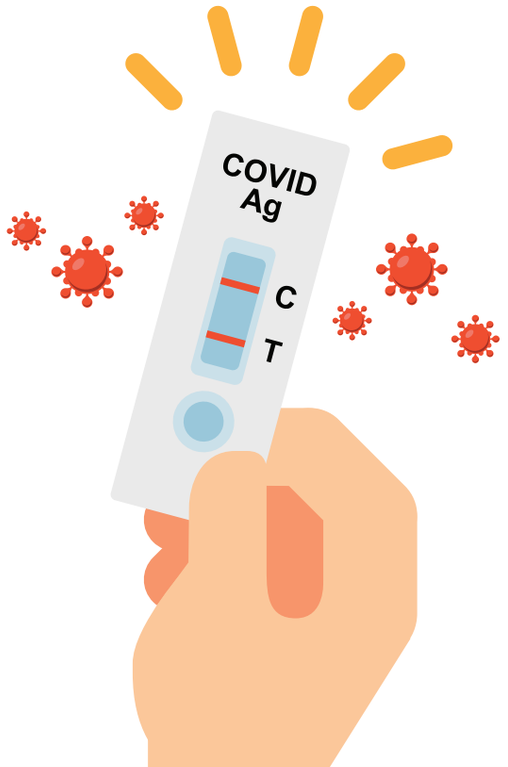
Unvaccinated?

Stay home and quarantine while waiting for your result.

Vaccinated?

You don't need to quarantine while you wait, unless you develop symptoms.

MY COVID-19 TEST IS POSITIVE. NOW WHAT?



Isolate until at least day 5

- Isolate at home and away from others for at least 5 days.
- End isolation after 5 days if you did not have symptoms, or if you're fever-free for 24 hours and your symptoms are resolving.

Take precautions until day 10

- Wear a mask around others.
- Avoid travel.
- Avoid being around people who are high risk.

Seek medical care immediately if you experience symptoms, such as difficulty breathing or chest pain.

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MANAGE YOUR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AT HOME | COVID-19 |

If you have possible or confirmed COVID-19

1. **Stay home** except to get medical care.

2. **Monitor your symptoms** carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately.

3. **Get rest and stay hydrated.**

4. If you have a medical appointment, **call the healthcare provider** ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.

5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and **notify the dispatch personnel** that you have or may have COVID-19.

6. **Cover your cough and sneeze** with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.

7. **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

8. As much as possible, **stay** in a specific room and **away from other people** in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a mask.

9. **Avoid sharing personal items** with other people in your household, like dishes, towels and bedding.

10. **Clean all surfaces** that are touched often, like counters, tabletops and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.

cdc.gov/coronavirus