



COVID-19 Vaccine: What You Need To Know About Both Doses

As the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to Oklahomans, it's important to remember that you'll need to receive two doses of the vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccines made by Pfizer and Moderna have been given an Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, meaning they are safe, effective and ready for Americans to use. Both vaccines require two doses.

Even after you receive the second dose, it's vital that you keep following other precautions — wear a mask, wash your hands and watch your distance — to keep others safe. The vaccine is intended to protect you, but you still need to take action to protect those around you.

Why do I need to take two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Both doses are necessary for protection from COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There is not enough data currently to determine what level of protection, if any, the first dose will give you on its own.

For that reason, we strongly encourage you continue to wear a mask, wash your hands and follow social distancing precautions between your first and second dose.

When do I need to get my second dose?

You should get your second dose no earlier than 21 days after your first dose. It can be longer if needed, but should be as close to the 21-day mark as possible.

How will I know to come back for my second dose?

You have been scheduled for your second dose. You will receive reminders through the email you used to sign up for your first dose.

What should I expect after the first dose?

There are some common vaccine side effects that you may experience, including some pain or swelling on the arm where you got the shot. There is a chance you may also experience fever, chills, tiredness or a headache. These side effects are in line with the ones you might experience with other vaccines such as your annual flu shot.

If you experience pain or discomfort, the CDC recommends you talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. You can also apply a cool cloth to the vaccine site, or stretch or exercise your arm.

Side effects should go away in a few days. Call your doctor:

- 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



Even if you experience side effects from the first shot, you should still get the second shot unless your doctor or medical provider tells you otherwise. The vaccine will not work well if you don't get both shots.

What should I expect after the second dose?

It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require two shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.

The same common side effects described above can occur after your second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. In testing for the Pfizer vaccine, side effects were more likely to occur after dose #2 than dose #1.

While the vaccine is at least 95% effective in protecting you from getting the virus, it's important you continue to do your part to protect yourself and others as vaccine distribution progresses. We recommend you continue wearing a mask, washing your hands and watching your distance to protect those around you as we work to distribute the vaccine across the state.

Additional Resources

- To use the Vaccine Scheduler Portal, visit:
 - <https://vaccinate.oklahoma.gov>
 - If you would like to learn more about your eligibility, but cannot access the internet, please call 211 or your local health department.
- For the media release specific to the vaccine registration portal, visit:
 - <https://oklahoma.gov/covid19/newsroom/2021/january/osdh-launches-online-portal-for-easy-covid-19-vaccine-registration.html>
- To view the complete statewide vaccination framework, visit:
 - <https://oklahoma.gov/covid19/vaccine-information.html>