

COVID-19 VACCINE

MISINFORMATION FAQ

With so much information circulating about COVID-19 vaccines, it's understandable to have questions. As a project of the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC), the Vaccinate ALL 58 (VA58) Campaign aims to decrease vaccine hesitancy by providing Californians with trusted, accurate, and timely information about COVID-19 vaccines.

**You are an
important
part of our
work!**

Please send COVID-19 vaccine-related rumors circulating in your communities to rumors@cdph.ca.gov.



1. How are vaccines authorized?

- Vaccines are authorized only when review of the available data provides clear evidence that they are safe, effective, and any benefits outweigh the risks of the vaccines. This review is conducted by the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), as well as several other groups made up of doctors and health experts across the country.
- COVID-19 vaccine development [followed the same steps](#) as other vaccines to ensure they were safe and effective before being made available to the public. No trial phases were skipped, and all phases were thoroughly evaluated to meet the high standards of safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality of the FDA.

2. What safety monitoring happens when COVID-19 vaccines are authorized?

- COVID-19 vaccines have undergone and will continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.
- Vaccine safety events are monitored using several surveillance systems, including [V-safe](#), [VAERS](#), and [VSD](#). Thanks to these platforms, we know that the vaccine is an incredibly safe way to protect adults and children against COVID-19.
- Side effects after receiving the vaccine tend to be mild and temporary, and serious adverse reactions after vaccination are rare.

3. How do we know mRNA vaccines are safe and effective?

- Coronaviruses are not new, and we've been studying them for years. Prior to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines, researchers had been [working with mRNA vaccines for decades](#).
- We have over two years of data that shows that the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are an [incredibly safe and effective way to protect against severe illness by COVID-19 infection](#). In addition to the many clinical studies on vaccine safety and efficacy, mRNA vaccines have been safely given to billions of people around the world.

4. Do COVID-19 vaccines and boosters protect against emerging variants?

- COVID-19 vaccines have proven to be [highly effective in preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death](#), even with recent, more infectious variants.
- Recent data shows that adults who received the updated bivalent vaccine [reduce their risk of infection by at least 40%](#) compared to those who have only received their primary series.
- The first booster doses were monovalent and targeted the original strain while the updated boosters are bivalent and target both the original strain and the Omicron strains causing the more recent cases.
- An updated bivalent booster dose provides [significant additional protection against COVID-19 infection and symptoms](#) compared to monovalent vaccines alone.

5. What is the risk of myocarditis following COVID-19 vaccination?

- Myocarditis or pericarditis [after COVID-19 vaccination is rare](#). The tiny fraction of people who develop myocarditis after receiving a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine generally have mild symptoms that go away within a few days.

- Risk of heart complications is much higher after COVID-19 infection than after mRNA vaccination.
- Of the tens of million doses of bivalent booster given to people 12 years and older, there have only been a few confirmed cases of myocarditis. You are more likely to get struck by lightning than to get myocarditis after COVID-19 vaccination.

6. Are serious adverse health reactions more likely after COVID-19 vaccination or COVID-19 infection?

- COVID-19 infection has caused over 1 million deaths in the U.S., 30,000 people are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 infection, and recent data suggest that as many as 1 in 5 people experience long-term symptoms.
- One study showed that children and adolescents with Covid-19 infection were more likely to develop serious post-Covid conditions such as diabetes and myocarditis.
- Billions of people world-wide have been safely vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Side effects after COVID-19 vaccination tend to be mild and go away within a few days. Serious side effects that cause long-term health problems are extremely rare following COVID-19 vaccination.

7. What is the effect of COVID-19 vaccination on fertility and/or pregnancy?

- COVID-19 vaccines have proven to be safe with no effects on fertility for those who are trying to get pregnant, are pregnant, or are breastfeeding.
- In several large studies and vaccine monitoring systems, scientists have not found an increased risk for miscarriage or other birth abnormalities after COVID-19 vaccination.
- Vaccines have proven to be safe for adolescents going through puberty with no long-term effects on fertility. Though some people may experience temporary changes in menstruation after vaccination, there is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause fertility problems. Increase stress, changes in weight and exercise, and other major lifestyle changes can affect menstrual cycles.

8. Are COVID-19 vaccines necessary for children?

- COVID-19 infection has become one of the top five leading causes of death in children under 5 years and vaccines make these deaths preventable.
- Some children, including those with underlying medical conditions, may be at increased risk for developing severe outcomes after COVID-19 infection such as mental health disorders, hospitalization, long COVID, myocarditis, multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), and death. Vaccination lowers the risk of severe illness and provides strong protection against MIS-C.
- Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccination, including completing the primary series and a booster dose when eligible, is critical to maximizing protection against COVID-19.
- Over 30 million children have safely received the vaccine and are now protected against severe COVID-19 illness.

9. Will alternative treatments like Ivermectin offer me more protection than the COVID-19 vaccine?

- The FDA has not authorized or approved Ivermectin for use in preventing or treating COVID-19 as it has not been shown to be safe or effective for humans.
- Many people have been seriously harmed and some have died after taking products not approved for COVID-19. Products are approved or prescribed for specified use and cannot be transferred for use to treat COVID-19.

10. If I get sick from COVID-19 infection, are there federally authorized therapeutics available to me?

- The FDA has approved or authorized several COVID-19 therapeutics after scientific evidence showed that they are effective for reducing the risk of serious illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19.
- Therapeutics are medications prescribed by your healthcare provider that can stop COVID-19 illness from getting serious and reduce your symptoms.
- Reach out to your healthcare provider to learn if these medications can help manage your COVID-19 symptoms.