Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
COVID-19 VACCINE QUESTIONS

Revised November 22, 2021

NOTE: These questions are for **vaccine-related information about COVID-19**.
For **other questions about COVID-19**, please see our general COVID-19 FAQs page at health.hawaii.gov/prepare/files/2020/04/DOH_COVID-19_FAQs.pdf.

This document provides reliable and up-to-date information to the general public during the continuing COVID-19 global pandemic. Key messages are the importance of maintaining preventive measures while we quickly try to vaccinate as many people as possible. Main preventive measures include the following:

- ***getting vaccinated for COVID-19 as soon as you are eligible***
- *practicing **social distancing** during the COVID-19 pandemic*
- ***wearing cloth face coverings ("masks") when out in public (particularly indoors or in large groups outdoors)***
- ***frequent hand-washing***
- ***avoiding touching your face with dirty hands***
- ***staying home when you are sick***
    - *Do not go to work, school, and other activities if you are feeling ill.*

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath or trouble breathing, as well as chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, and others.

Acronyms and abbreviations used in this document:

- **CDC**: US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- **COVID-19**: Coronavirus Disease 2019
- **EUA**: Emergency Use Authorization
- **FDA**: US Food & Drug Administration
- **HDOH**: State of Hawaii Department of Health
- **VAERS**: Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System

When will a COVID-19 vaccine be available in Hawaii?
The vaccine is now available across the state. The first supply of the COVID-19 vaccine was made available in Hawaii starting in mid-December 2020. The number of doses has increased significantly, and most people can be vaccinated in sites across Hawaii, often without an appointment (i.e., "walk-in").

You can find out where vaccine sites are located at hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine and www.vaccines.gov/search.

How much does the COVID-19 vaccine cost?
The COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone, including people without health insurance coverage. Ending the COVID-19 pandemic is a national public health priority so the vaccine is offered at no cost, regardless of health insurance coverage or immigration status. It is being purchased by the federal government with taxpayer dollars.

How many doses of the vaccine are needed and why?
Most of the COVID-19 vaccines currently being considered for approval in the United States require two shots to be effective. Pfizer and Moderna each require two shots, while Johnson & Johnson requires one shot.

Pfizer's and Moderna's two shots are spaced out by a number of weeks and you will be alerted when to get your second shot. If you have had your first shot, you will automatically be eligible to get the second shot when it is due.

Who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?
As of November 2021, everyone aged 5 and over is now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination at this time.

You can read about CDC vaccine recommendations at the following site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations-process.html.

Are children able to be vaccinated against COVID-19?
Yes. In May 2021, CDC and FDA approved emergency authorization for the Pfizer vaccine for adolescents aged 12 to 15, and then in November 2021, they approved emergency authorization for the Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5 to 11. In August 2021, FDA granted full approval for the Pfizer vaccine for persons aged 16 and older (see **What does it mean if a vaccine has Emergency Use Authorization or is fully approved by FDA?** below for more information).

CDC and FDA based their decision to authorize the vaccine for young children and adolescents on the following information:

- Vaccination is the best way to protect children aged 5 and older from COVID-19, which has caused tens of thousands of children to be hospitalized and led COVID-19 to becoming one of the top ten causes of pediatric death, despite children's lower risk of becoming severely ill or hospitalized from COVID-19 compared to adults.
- The vaccine has been rigorously reviewed and is safe and effective in children. Its authorization by FDA and CDC was based on extensive data from clinic trials of thousands of younger children that showed high levels of safety and effectiveness, especially when compared to the risks associated with getting COVID-19.
- Children getting vaccinated against COVID-19 not only reduces their risk of getting COVID-19, but also helps them "return to normal," such as in-person school and sports activities, while protecting their vulnerable family members and the community.

The State of Hawaii is following FDA and CDC's recommendations for childhood COVID-19 vaccines, making the Pfizer vaccine available to everyone aged 5 and older through certified vaccination providers. As with adolescents aged 12 to 17, parents or legal guardians must submit signed consent forms before a minor child can be vaccinated

You can read about CDC vaccine recommendations at the following site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/adolescents.html.

You can read about the CDC's authorization of the Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 at the following site: www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1102-PediatricCOVID-19Vaccine.html.

When and where will the vaccine be available for younger children?
COVID-19 vaccines for children under 12 will be available as early as November 8, 2021, from over 200 locations statewide that include medical facilities, community health centers, mobile

clinics, pharmacies, pediatrician's offices, and more than 130 public, private, and charter schools. Parents should contact their child's school directly to see if and when the school will be offering vaccinations to students. Information on where vaccines are available can be found at hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine.

Is the Pfizer vaccine dose for children aged 5 to 11 different from the adult vaccine?
Yes, the Pfizer vaccine dose for children aged 5 to 11 is 10 micrograms, which is one-third the dose used for adults.

How can I protect my child who is too young to get vaccinated?
CDC has recommendations for children aged 4 and under who are not yet able to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. These include the following:

- All adults and all children aged 5 and older in the household should get vaccinated to protect younger children who cannot yet be vaccinated.
- Everyone, including both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated people, should wear a mask indoors in public to prevent spread of the Delta variant of the virus.
- Choose safer activities for your family, such as outdoor activities or indoor activities in areas that are well ventilated. Avoid large crowds and gatherings.

You can read more about CDC's recommendations for protecting unvaccinated children at this site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/about-covid-19/caring-for-children/families.html.

Where can I go to get myself or a family member registered to get vaccinated for COVID-19?
HDOH maintains a website with registration links for multiple healthcare systems across the state. You can find it at this URL: hawaiicovid19.com/vaccination-registration.

There are county-specific sites at the following links:

- **Kauai County**
  General information and vaccine site locations: kauai.gov/Government/Departments-Agencies/Emergency-Management-Agency-formerly-Civil-Defense/Coronavirus-Disease-2019-COVID-19/Vaccine

- **Maui County**
  General information: www.mauinuistrong.info
  Vaccine site information: www.mauinuistrong.info/vaccination-locations
- **Hawaii County**
  General information and vaccine site locations: coronavirus-response-county-of-hawaii-hawaiicountygis.hub.arcgis.com/pages/vaccine-information

- **City & County of Honolulu**
  General information and vaccine site locations: www.oneoahu.org/vaccine and hawaiicovid19.com/vaccination-registration/#honolulu-county

A nationwide vaccine locator is also available at this site: vaccinefinder.org/search.

How will I know when it's my turn to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?
As of May 12, 2021, all persons in the state who are aged 12 or over are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. HDOH maintains the latest information on the vaccine's status in Hawaii at www.hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine.

Will there be enough vaccine for everyone in Hawaii?
Yes. Although the initial supply was limited, millions more doses are being made and everyone in Hawaii will eventually be able to be vaccinated, most likely in the first half of 2021.

Can the COVID-19 vaccine give someone COVID-19?
No, you cannot get COVID-19 from the COVID-19 vaccine. The mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19 so it is safe.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for pregnant or breastfeeding women?
Yes. CDC recommends that women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to get pregnant receive the COVID-19 vaccine, based on extensive data and evidence gathered since last year showing that the vaccines are safe and effective for these groups and far outweigh risks. More recent evidence also shows that the vaccines help lower risk of serious illness, death, and other adverse health outcomes for both the pregnant person and their newborn.

Key information:

- COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future because of the dangers of getting infected with COVID-19, particularly the Delta variant.
- Compared to fully vaccinated pregnant women, unvaccinated pregnant women and their newborn children had greater risk of health problems, including:
  - Severe illness requiring hospitalization or intensive care unit admission of the pregnant person
  - Death of the pregnant person
  - Preterm birth
  - Admission of newborn child to neonatal intensive care unit
  - Possible risk of outcomes such as preeclampsia or stillbirth
- New evidence shows no increased risk of miscarriage after receiving an mRNA vaccine (e.g., Pfizer or Moderna) before 20 weeks of pregnancy.
- Evidence shows the benefits of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine outweigh any known or potential risks of vaccination during pregnancy.

- There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.
- Pregnant and recently pregnant people are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people.
- All approved vaccines are safe for these groups:
    - Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are mRNA vaccines that do not contain the live virus that causes COVID-19, so they cannot give you or your unborn child COVID-19, nor will they interact with your DNA or your unborn child's DNA.
    - The Johnson & Johnson vaccine contains a modified version of a different virus (i.e., not the coronavirus that causes COVID-19), which has been safely given to pregnant people in all trimesters of pregnancy without any adverse pregnancy-related outcomes to the pregnant person or their child.
- You should talk to your healthcare provider you are seeing for your pregnancy care to discuss whether to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

If you would like to speak to someone about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy, please contact MotherToBaby by calling **1-866-626-6847** or going to mothertobaby.org/ask-an-expert.

You can learn more about the risks of COVID-19 for pregnant people at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/pregnant-people.html

You can learn more about protecting yourself during pregnancy at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

You can learn more about COVID-19 vaccines for pregnant women at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/pregnancy.html

You can learn more about vaccines in general for pregnant women at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pregnancy/index.html

Why was the Johnson & Johnson vaccine temporary halted?
Even after approval, all vaccine use is continuously monitored for safety and effectiveness. Use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was paused across the United States in mid-April 2021, including in Hawaii, due to the possibility of extremely rare but serious blood clots called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) in combination with low levels of blood platelets that required further investigation. On April 23, CDC recommended resuming its use but to inform people receiving it of its risks, which are very uncommon. Hawaii resumed use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine on April 29, 2021.

You can read more about the temporary halting of Johnson & Johnson vaccine and the CDC decision to resume its use at the following site:

- www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html

Information will be made public as it becomes available in the coming months.

More information the safety of FDA-authorized vaccines is available at the following sites.

- Pfizer: www.fda.gov/media/144414/download
- Moderna: www.fda.gov/media/144638/download
- Johnson & Johnson: www.fda.gov/media/146305/download

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available?

Yes, you should get vaccinated even if you have already had COVID-19 and may have "natural immunity." This is what you should know:

- It is possible, but rare, to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 even after recovering from COVID-19.
- Experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. This continues to be studied by experts and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.
- Studies have shown that vaccination provides a strong boost in protection in people who have recovered from COVID-19.
- If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you or your child has a history of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in adults (MIS-A) or children (MIS-C), consider delaying vaccination until you or your child have recovered form being sick and for 90 days after the date of diagnosis of MIS-A or MIS-C.
- No one should be vaccinated while they are currently sick with a COVID-19 infection. Vaccinating should be postponed until the person has no more symptoms and criteria have been met for them to discontinue isolation.

Can I take the COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccines, like the flu vaccine?

Yes, you can. CDC now recommends that you can get your influenza vaccine (flu shot) at the same time that you get your COVID-19 vaccination, if you are not already vaccinated for COVID-19. For more information, go to the following: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect.html).

You can read more about the benefits of getting vaccinated for the flu at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccine-benefits.htm.

(During the previous flu season, 2020-21, CDC had recommended *against* getting the flu vaccine at the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine, because of a need for more data on safety and effectiveness. At that time, they recommended that no other vaccine should be received between 14 days before you receive your COVID-19 vaccine and 14 days afterward, but

research data since that time shows that it is safe and effective to get other vaccines at the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine.)

Do I need to wear a mask when I am receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?
Yes, you should wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth whenever you are in public and close contact with people outside your household cannot be avoided, such as when you are getting a vaccine shot. (Anyone who has trouble breathing or who is unable to remove a mask without assistance should not wear a mask.)

Will I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with other people after I am "fully vaccinated" for COVID-19? When can I stop wearing a mask?
Yes, because of the Delta variant, even after you are "fully vaccinated" (which means two weeks have passed since you received your final shot), you will need to wear a mask in indoor public settings and practice other preventive measures, like avoiding close contact with other people. Mask wearing is also recommended in crowded outdoor settings, even for fully vaccinated people.

While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others.

Are there other vaccines that can help prevent me from getting COVID-19? Does getting the annual flu shot help?
No. A flu vaccine will not protect you from getting COVID-19, but it can prevent you from getting influenza (the flu) at the same time as COVID-19, which can keep you from getting more severe illness. Experts believe both will be spreading at the same time this coming winter.

Right now, there are three COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved: COVID-19 Pfizer BioNTech Vaccine, COVID-19 Moderna Vaccine, and Johnson & Johnson Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. These are the only available vaccines that will protect against COVID-19 at this time.

On April 13, 2021, use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was halted across the United States, including Hawaii, pending a careful review of its safety. On April 23, CDC recommended lifting the pause. Hawaii resumed use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine on April 29, 2021.

You can read more about the temporary halting of Johnson & Johnson vaccine at the following site: www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html

Does immunity after getting COVID-19 last longer than the protection you would get from a COVID-19 vaccine? How long will the vaccine protect people?
The protection someone gains from having an infection (called "natural immunity") varies depending on the disease, and it varies from person to person. The virus causing COVID-19 is

new, so we don't know how long natural immunity for COVID-19 might last.

Experts are working hard to learn more about COVID-19, including natural immunity and immunity from vaccines, and CDC and HDOH will let the public know as new evidence becomes available and recommendations change.

Does the COVID-19 vaccine have any side effects? Can it cause you to get sick?
Clinical trials for the COVID-19 vaccines and later vaccinations of millions of people have found that in general, most people do not have serious problems after being vaccinated.

At this time, the side effect that some people have had is a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine. If you know you are allergic to any ingredient in one of the vaccines, you should not get that vaccine. If you know you have allergies, but don't know if you are allergic to an ingredient in the vaccines talk to your provider or the provider offering you the vaccine before getting vaccinated.

Some common but temporary side effects may be soreness, redness, or warmth in the arm where they got the shot. These symptoms usually go away on their own within a week. Some people report getting a headache or fever after receiving a vaccine.

Can you still get sick even if you've been vaccinated?
Yes. Because no vaccine is 100%, it is still possible to get infected with COVID-19, especially as fast-spreading strains like the Delta variant become prevalent in Hawaii. These are called "breakthrough" cases and they are uncommon.

It's important to remember that the vaccine still provides strong protection in breakthrough cases. The vaccines are very effective against COVID-19, including the Delta variant, and the risk of someone with a breakthrough COVID-19 infection getting sick or dying is much lower if they are fully vaccinated (i.e., two weeks have passed since their final dose). Fully vaccinated people who become infected are also significantly less likely to infect other people.

What is "herd immunity" and how does it work? What percentage of the population needs to get vaccinated to have herd immunity to COVID-19?
Herd immunity refers to a situation where most of the population is immune to an infectious disease, either from previous infection or vaccination. This provides indirect protection (i.e., "herd immunity" or "herd protection") to people who are not immune to the disease because it makes it harder for the disease to spread.

Experts do not know what percentage of people would need to get vaccinated or have natural immunity (from previous infection) to achieve herd immunity for COVID-19.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?
The COVID-19 vaccines being offered to the public are very safe. They have gone through

comprehensive initial studies, checking for safety and effectiveness and making sure they meet the FDA's rigorous standards. Even after emergency approval or full approval (see next question), they are continually monitored for any problems or concerns. Hundreds of millions of doses have been given in the United States safely, providing those who received them with the strongest protection against COVID-19 infection, serious illness, and death.

HDOH is also monitoring for possible adverse events and for any announcements from FDA and CDC. This monitoring is critical to help ensure that the benefits continue to outweigh the risks for people who receive vaccines.

If any vaccine were found to be unsafe, FDA, CDC and HDOH would let the public and medical providers know.

What does it mean if a vaccine has Emergency Use Authorization or is fully approved by FDA?
Emergency Use Authorization.
Initially, all three vaccines approved for use in the United States (i.e., Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson) had met the standards for FDA's Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) after they first were carefully tested in clinical trials of tens of thousands of people to make sure that they are safe and that they work. When a vaccine is granted EUA by the FDA, it means the benefits of this vaccine outweigh the known and potential harms of becoming infected with COVID-19.

An EUA also means that even after the initial studies, safety is continuously checked. There are many safety monitoring systems that watch for adverse effects and possible side effects that were not seen in clinical trials. If an unexpected adverse event is seen, experts quickly study it further to assess whether it is a true safety concern. Experts then decide whether changes are needed in the vaccine recommendations. This is what happened with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine while its use was paused (you can read more about the Johnson & Johnson pause at www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html).

Full FDA approval.
On August 23, 2021, the FDA gave full approval to Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine, which has been renamed Comirnaty, for use in people aged 16 and over (the Pfizer vaccine is still approved for people aged 12 to 15 under Emergency Use Authorization. Full approval comes after the FDA analyzes the effectiveness and safety data from not only the tens of thousands of clinical participants, but also the analysis of real-world safety data such as the millions of Americans who have received the Pfizer vaccine since it was approved for emergency use.

Like the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines under Emergency Use Authorization, the fully approved Pfizer vaccine will continue to be monitored carefully for any concerns about safety or effectiveness that might occur.

You can read more about FDA's approval decision at this link: www.fda.gov/news-events/press-

announcements/fada-approves-first-covid-19-vaccine.

How do I report it if I have a problem or bad reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?
CDC and FDA encourage the public to report possible side effects ("adverse events") through VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) and V-safe.

An "adverse event" is any health problem that happens after a shot or other vaccine. An adverse event might be truly caused by a vaccine, or it might be pure coincidence (something that happened after vaccination but not caused by the vaccine).

One of the main jobs of CDC's Immunization Safety Office is doing research to find out if adverse events that are reported by doctors, vaccine manufacturers, and the public are truly caused by a vaccine.

- VAERS on the Internet
  VAERS is a national system that collects data to look for side effects ("adverse events") that are unexpected, appear to happen more often than expected, or occur in unusual patterns. CDC uses VAERS to monitor the safety of vaccines across the country, which is a top priority. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) can be found at the following website: vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html.

- V-safe on your smartphone
  You can also use a tool on your smartphone, called V-safe, to tell CDC about any side effects you have after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. V-safe will also provide you reminders if you need a second vaccine dose.
  V-safe uses text messages and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through V-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any problems you experience after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information.

  You can learn more about how to register and use V-safe at the following website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html.

You can learn more about the difference between routine side effects and adverse events at this CDC website: www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/ensuringsafety/sideeffects/index.html.

Why would a vaccine be needed if we can do other things, like social distancing and wearing masks, to prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading?
Getting a vaccine is only one of several tools available to us to stop the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others.

Are there known adverse events associated with the COVID-19 vaccines?
Adverse events are uncommon but still possible. A severe allergic reaction would usually occur within a few minutes to one hour after receiving the vaccine. For this reason, you will be asked to stay at the place where you receive your vaccine for at least 15 minutes so you can be monitored for any problems after vaccination.

Signs of severe allergic reaction can include the following:

- difficulty breathing
- swelling of your face and throat
- a fast heartbeat
- a bad rash all over your body
- dizziness and weakness

Overall, these adverse events do not raise safety concerns, and the risk of serious adverse events is outweighed by the benefits of receiving the vaccine.

More information about adverse effects is available at the following sites:
www.fda.gov/media/144414/download
www.fda.gov/media/144638/download

How much protection does the COVID-19 vaccine provide?
The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that have been approved for the general public have been shown to be about 95% effective 14 days after the second dose. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine that has been approved for the general public have been shown to be about 70% effective 14 days after the single dose. All three are effective against the Delta variant.

More information is available at:
www.fda.gov/media/144245/download

Does the COVID-19 vaccine protect against transmission of the virus to other people?
Most vaccines that protect from viral illnesses also reduce transmission of the virus that causes the disease by those who are vaccinated.

Evidence exists, however, that fully vaccinated people can still spread the Delta variant to other people, though the rate of transmission is much lower than with unvaccinated people. This is one of several reasons to continue wearing a mask and practicing social distancing while indoors or in crowded outdoor settings, even after getting fully vaccinated.

I want to know what is in the vaccine I will be getting. What are the ingredients?
The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine includes the following ingredients:

- messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA)
- lipids
    - (4-hydroxybutyl)azanediyl)bis(hexane-6,1-diyl)bis(2-hexyldecanoate)

    - 2[(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide
    - 1,2-Distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine
    - Cholesterol
- potassium chloride
- monobasic potassium phosphate
- sodium chloride
- dibasic sodium phosphate dihydrate
- sucrose

The Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine contains the following ingredients:

- messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA)
- lipids
    - SM-102
    - polyethylene glycol [PEG] 2000 dimyristoyl glycerol [DMG]
    - cholesterol
    - 1,2-distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine [DSPC])
- Tromethamine
- tromethamine hydrochloride
- acetic acid
- sodium acetate
- sucrose

The Johnson & Johnson Janssen COVID-19 vaccine includes the following ingredients:

- recombinant replication-incompetent adenovirus
- citric acid monohydrate
- trisodium citrate dihydrate
- ethanol
- 2-hydroxypropyl-ß-cyclodestrin (HBCD)
- Polysorbate-80
- Sodium chloride

Note: On April 13, 2021, use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was halted across the United States, including Hawaii, pending a review of its safety. On April 23, CDC recommended resuming its use. Hawaii resumed use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine on April 29, 2021. You can read more about the temporary halting of Johnson & Johnson vaccine at the following site: www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/fda-cdc-lift-vaccine-use.html.

None of the vaccines contain eggs, gelatin, latex, or preservatives.

More information about these vaccines' ingredients is available at the following sites.

- Pfizer: www.fda.gov/media/144414/download

- Moderna: www.fda.gov/media/144638/download
- Johnson & Johnson: www.fda.gov/media/144245/download

Will the COVID-19 vaccine be a yearly vaccine? Are there recommendations for third doses or booster shots?
At this time there are no plans for the COVID-19 vaccine to be a *yearly* shot, like "the flu shot" currently is. However, FDA and CDC have recommended that all fully vaccinated people age 18 and over should get an *additional* shot or a *booster* shot to stay as protected from COVID-19 infection and complications as possible.

(It is important to note that booster shots are common for vaccines, which can have a reduction in effect over time. The FDA-authorized and -approved COVID-19 vaccines—Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson—remain highly effective against COVID-19, including the Delta variant.)

In August 2021 CDC announced new recommendations for an *additional third dose* of the Pfizer vaccine (Comirnaty) or Moderna vaccine for immunocompromised individuals (see **Who should get an additional third shot?** below).

Also, on September 23, 2021, CDC announced recommendations of *booster doses* of the Pfizer vaccine for people 65 years of age and older, as well as people age who are at high risk of getting serious illness from COVID-19 infection due to health conditions, job exposure, etc. On October 21, 2021, CDC announced similar recommendations for those who received the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. As of November 21, 2021, FDA and CDC are authorizing booster shots for all fully vaccinated people aged 18 and over (see **Who should get a booster shot?** below).

Who should get an additional third shot?
An additional third shot of Pfizer (Comirnaty) and Moderna vaccines is recommended for people who are immunocompromised. This is different from booster shots of the Pfizer vaccine (Comirnaty) which are addressed in the next question.

This is what you should know about an additional shot for immunocompromised people:
- An additional third dose of mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna) is recommended for people whose immune systems are moderately to severely compromised.
- People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised need a third shot because they are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 due to being more at risk of serious and prolonged illness.
- People with moderately to severely compromised immune systems may not build the same level of immunity from just two doses of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines compared to people who are not immunocompromised.
- This third dose is not the same as a booster dose given to people when their immune response to a primary vaccine series is likely to have waned over time.

- People who are immunocompromised are who are not sure if they are should contact their healthcare provider to determine whether and when to receive a third dose.

More information about third doses for immunocompromised people can be found at this CDC site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html.

Who should get a booster shot?
As of November 21, 2021, CDC is recommending that all fully vaccinated people aged 18 and over who received the Pfizer vaccine (Comirnaty) or Moderna vaccine *may* get a booster shot, and all people who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine *should* get a booster shot. People aged 50 and over or those who live in long-term care settings *should* get a booster shot.

As with the initial doses of the COVID-19 vaccines, the booster shots will be free and available to everyone who is eligible, regardless of insurance coverage or immigration status.

This is what you should know about booster shots:

- According to CDC, all people aged 18 and over who received one of the mRNA vaccines (i.e., Pfizer vaccine [Comirnaty] or the Moderna vaccine) may get a booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, to be administered at least six months after their second dose of the mRNA vaccine.
    - People aged 50 and over who received an mRNA vaccine and people who live in long-term settings who received an mRNA vaccine should get a booster shot at least six months after their second dose of the mRNA vaccine.
- According to CDC, all people who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine should get a booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, to be administered at least two months after their dose of the vaccine:
- Individuals may choose to get a different vaccine from the one they received initially.
    - For example, someone who received the first two doses of the Pfizer vaccine may get a booster shot with the Moderna vaccine or the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, or vice versa, or someone who initially received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may choose to get Pfizer or Moderna.
- Getting unvaccinated people fully vaccinated remains a priority for stopping COVID-19.
- Hawaii's guidelines on the CDC recommendations prioritize booster shots for people age 65 and older and people age 50 to 64 with underlying medical conditions. Other people covered by the CDC recommendation for booster shots (i.e., people in long-term care settings and those with frequent institutional or occupational exposure to COVID-19) may consider getting one in Hawaii as supplies permit.
- The decision by FDA and CDC to recommend these booster shots is based on an independent and transparent review process of the latest data and evidence showing that booster shots are safe and effective. Side effects for booster shots were similar to those from second vaccine doses and were mostly mild, moderate, and short-lived. FDA and CDC will continue to evaluate data to determine when other groups may become

eligible for booster shots.

- The booster shots are the same formulation as the current COVID-19 vaccines. The Moderna vaccine booster shot, however, is only half the dose of the initial series. The risks to getting a booster shot so far have been similar previous doses, including temporary side effects such as fever, headache, fatigue, and pain at the injection site.
- The definition of "fully vaccinated" remains the same: people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose of Pfizer (Comirnaty) or Moderna, or two weeks after their single dose of Johnson & Johnson.

More information about booster shots for fully vaccinated people can be found at the following CDC sites:

- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html
- www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0924-booster-recommendations-.html

Can different brands of COVID-19 vaccine be used interchangeably?
For the initial vaccine doses, no. Initial doses of COVID-19 vaccines using mRNA are not interchangeable with each other. Both the first dose and the second dose should be done with the same product.

However, for the booster shot, individuals may choose a different vaccine from the one they received as the initial dose.

Can I take a pain reliever or fever reducer after vaccination if I have side effects?
Yes. Pain relievers and fever reducers (e.g., acetaminophen, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) may be taken if pain results from the vaccine, but they are not recommended to *prevent* post-vaccination symptoms.

Are there any contraindications to getting the COVID-19 vaccine?
According to CDC, you should not receive the vaccine at this time and speak to their healthcare provider if you have a history of the following:

- Severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) after a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine or any of its components
- Immediate allergic reaction of any severity to a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine or any of its components (including polyethylene glycol [PEG])
- Immediate allergic reaction of any severity to polysorbate (due to potential cross-reactive hypersensitivity with the vaccine ingredient PEG)

More information is available at:
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html.

Is there a time limit between doses where dose 1 is no longer effective and a patient must start again with the initial dose?
At this time, there is currently no information available about how long someone can wait to

get their second dose (CDC will update guidance as it becomes available). This is why it is recommended that everyone get their second dose soon after they are able.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines effective against all currently circulating SARS-CoV-2 variants/strains?
Research indicates that immune response induced by the vaccine strain should be effective against the variants currently in circulation. Antibodies produced by the body as a result of vaccination are equally capable of neutralizing these variants.

More information is available at:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-emerging-variant.html.

I want to know when I will be able to be vaccinated. Could you tell me what tier of vaccination I fall into?
Hawaii had been vaccinating people according to a system of tiers recommended by CDC, based on risk and exposure to the coronavirus. Initially, only people in tiers 1a, 1b, and 1c, which include certain-high risk individuals (listed below), were the only ones eligible to be vaccinated in Hawaii.

However, as of April 19, 2021, the entire state of Hawaii has been in Phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. This means all persons in Hawaii aged 12 or older are eligible to receive the vaccine. More information is available at: hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine/#first-vaccines.

Does HDOH have plans to vaccinate people in care homes?
HDOH is working closely with various pharmacies to administer vaccinations to residents of licensed care homes including community care foster family homes to administer vaccinations to as many people as possible as quickly as possible. For many, this means that pharmacies have or will very soon contact the care homes to schedule vaccine administrations in their homes. On Oahu, all licensed care homes will be scheduled for in-home vaccinations. On neighbor islands, pharmacies are scheduling vaccinations through drive-through clinics or in-home appointments. DOH/OHCA is keeping licensed care homes updated weekly on when vaccinations will be made available so they can plan accordingly, too.

For more information, please visit: hawaiicovid19.com/vaccine.

Will I receive proof of vaccination?
When you get vaccinated, you should receive a vaccination card or printout that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it. If it is your first dose, the vaccination card may include information about when you should get your second dose.

You should also receive a paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you are being offered. Each authorized COVID-19 vaccine has its

own fact sheet that contains information to help you understand the risks and benefits of receiving that specific vaccine.

More information is available at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect.html.

Will the vaccine be mandated? Is there a "vaccine passport" in Hawaii?
At this time there is no state or federal requirement for the vaccine. As the vaccine becomes more readily available it is possible that businesses and other employers may choose to add a vaccine requirement.

In August 2021, the State of Hawaii mandated that all employees either show proof of being fully vaccinated or be subject to regular COVID-19 testing. The University of Hawaii has also required all students participating in in-person learning be fully vaccinated.

For more information on state or county requirements for the general public or business customers to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or to show a negative COVID-19 test, please visit our general COVID-19 FAQs at health.hawaii.gov/prepare/files/2020/04/DOH_COVID-19_FAQs.pdf and see the information at the question **Are the State of Hawaii and county governments mandating "vaccine passports" or requiring people to be vaccinated? Is vaccination required for any kind of activity?**

Are there any restrictions for non-citizens or undocumented people getting vaccinated?
No, there are not. The vaccine is available for free to everyone within the state of Hawaii, regardless of citizenship or immigration status. Insurance coverage is not required. All people residing in Hawaii are encouraged to get vaccinated if they are at least 12 years of age and do not have health conditions that would prevent them from getting vaccinated.

Do I have to have an ID to get vaccinated?
Although you may be asked for personal identification, it is not required in order to get a vaccine. Even if you do not provide an ID with you, you can get vaccinated.

What if I miss my second dose? What do I do?
It is important that you receive your second dose. The COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses are not completely effective unless you receive the second dose. Your second dose will be scheduled at the time you receive your initial dose. If you miss your second dose, reach out to the provider for recommendation of next steps.

If I cannot take the flu vaccine due to an egg allergy, can I receive the COVID-19 vaccine?
The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines do not contain human or animal cells. Since they are not grown in eggs like some influenza vaccines, you should be safe. However, if you have a history

of allergic or severe allergic reactions, you should seek guidance from your healthcare provider before choosing to be vaccinated.

Are there any tests people have to get before getting the vaccine?
CDC has found that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe for pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and those who are planning to get pregnant, so they are not recommending a routine pregnancy test or an antibody blood test for COVID-19 before you get the vaccine. You should talk with your healthcare provider about any questions you have due to your own personal medical history.

Can I get the second dose of the vaccine in a different state than where I got the first dose?
It is important to get the second dose of the *same* vaccine in the time frame required for your vaccine. You might be able to get that same vaccine in a different state, but you should check before traveling to ensure availability in the state you are traveling to. Consult that state's COVID-19 vaccine website. Make sure you have your immunization records, including the card you receive when you get your first dose.

Do we have to wait for one group to be vaccinated before the next group can receive vaccine? How long will it take to move between phases?
At this time, all persons aged 12 and older are eligible to be vaccinated. The system of tiers and groups is no longer in effect.

Can this vaccine cause COVID-19? How does it work?
No, the vaccine cannot cause COVID-19. The vaccine contains a synthetic, small piece of the SARS-CoV-2 genetic material (mRNA) that instructs cells in the body to make the virus's distinctive "spike" protein (SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19). When vaccinated, the body produces copies of the spike protein, which alone does not cause disease, and the immune system learns to react defensively, producing an immune response against the virus.

Although this technology has not been used in any FDA-licensed preventive vaccine, FDA scientists have expertise with this technology as it has been used to develop other preventive investigational vaccines that have been tested in human clinical trials. FDA does not have specific safety concerns with a vaccine that utilizes this technology.

More information is available at:
www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-legal-regulatory-and-policy-framework/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-frequently-asked-questions

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/mrna-vaccine-basics.html

What can I do after I am fully vaccinated?
If you are fully vaccinated (which means at least two weeks have passed since you have received the final dose of your vaccine), then you may be able to resume some activities safely.

This guidance from CDC represents a first step toward returning to everyday activities in our communities, although caution is still needed due to the Delta variant. It will be updated by CDC and HDOH as more people are vaccinated, COVID-19 rates rise or fall significantly, and new scientific evidence about variants and other issues becomes available. (After the Delta variant became common in the US, CDC recommended some restrictions on earlier guidance.)

At this time, CDC is advising that fully vaccinated people do the following:

- In indoor public settings in areas with substantial or high transmission of COVID-19, they should wear a mask to prevent spread, especially if they or a household member is immunocompromised.
- In outdoor settings, fully vaccinated people do not need to wear a mask, but they are encouraged to do so if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.
- They should get tested if they experience COVID-19 symptoms and isolate if they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days.
- They should get tested three to five days after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days after the exposure or until they receive a negative test.
- They can travel domestically without getting a viral test before or after traveling, including to/from Hawaii. They can also travel domestically without the need to self-quarantine following travel.
- They can travel internationally without getting tested before leaving the United States (unless required by their destination) and do not need to self-quarantine after returning to the United States. However:
    - International travelers must still have a negative viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before boarding a flight to the United States.
    - International travelers arriving in the United States are still recommended to get a viral test three to five days after travel, regardless of vaccination status.

You can read more about guidance for fully vaccinated people by visiting the following website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html.

Where can I find out more information?
For more information about COVID-19, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at **www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html**. You can also visit HDOH's COVID-19 websites at **hawaiicovid19.com** and **health.hawaii.gov/covid19**.

Finally, you can contact HDOH's partners at Aloha United Way from anywhere in Hawaii for information and referral services:

- Call 2-1-1.
- Text 877-275-6569 (include your zip code)
- Chat at www.auw211.org.
- Email info211@auw.org.

2·1·1 Get Connected. Get Help.™

Please direct inquiries and comments about these FAQs to: jonathan.hilts@doh.hawaii.gov.