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Information on the COVID-19 vaccine

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network remain committed to helping guide you through the COVID-19 pandemic as the nation works to halt the spread of this disease through a mass vaccination effort.

Blue Cross and BCN members can expect to pay \$0 to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

About the COVID-19 vaccines

There are currently three COVID-19 vaccines – **Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech** and the **Johnson & Johnson** – that are available across the country. The Pfizer vaccine received the full approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for people ages 16 and older. The FDA has also approved use of the Pfizer vaccine in children ages 5 to 15 years old under emergency use authorization. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have received emergency use authorization in adults ages 18 and older.

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19.*

As of Nov. 3, everyone ages 5 and older are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Moderna and Pfizer are delivered in two doses, administered a few weeks apart. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is delivered in one dose.

For more information about the vaccines, safety and possible side effects go to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)** and select *COVID-19 vaccines*.

Should I get the booster shot?

After receiving approval from the Food and Drug Administration's Emergency Use Authorization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now recommends that everyone who's 18 and older get a COVID-19 booster shot. Pfizer-BioNTech boosters are also authorized for everyone who's 12 and older.

If you received a Pfizer vaccine, a booster dose is recommended at least five months after completing your initial vaccination series. For the Moderna vaccine, the recommendation is at least six months after the primary series.

For individuals who received a Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the CDC advises they get a booster dose at least two months after completing the initial vaccination dose.

As a Blue Cross or BCN member, the **COVID-19 booster is available at no cost to you.**

Where to go

The CDC has an online tool to help people find vaccination opportunities near where they live.

- Search for a COVID-19 vaccination location on [VaccineFinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org)**
- Find a vaccination location in Michigan by visiting Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine**
- Individuals who live outside Michigan should check vaccine websites and distribution plans within their own states, which should be available through state or county public health departments. The eligibility policies, vaccine supplies and other vaccine information can vary from state to state.

Common questions about the COVID-19 vaccines

Is the vaccine safe?

Vaccine developers used work completed for other vaccines as a starting point in their fight against COVID-19, giving them a head start. In addition, 30,000 to 40,000 people took part in trials for each of the vaccines. Each of the COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use by the Food and Drug Administration followed all the same testing and evaluations as other vaccines that have been deemed safe. You can ask your physician about the benefits of the vaccine or you can find information about vaccine safety at the following websites:

- Check information from the CDC. You can find it by going to cdc.gov** and selecting *COVID-19 vaccines*.
- Visit the state of Michigan's website, Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine.** (If you are in another state, check the public health site in that state.)

Blue Cross has been monitoring information associated with the development and distribution of the vaccines for COVID-19. We have not found any evidence that receiving the vaccines increase the risk of or causes death.

What are the side effects?

We recommend people check with their physician for questions about *potential* side effects and the benefits of receiving the vaccine. Information about potential side effects has been posted on the CDC website – go to cdc.gov** and select *COVID-19 vaccines*.

Can people choose which vaccine they get?

Vaccine availability will be based on distribution, available doses, and other factors.

If you are vaccinated, do you still need to wear a mask?

Check here for CDC's [latest guidelines on face coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s0511-face-coverings.html).**

State, local and business guidelines also can still apply.

If you get the vaccine and then have a COVID test or an antibody test, would the tests show you had COVID?

The vaccines for COVID-19 do not contain the live virus; if a member receives the vaccine and is later given a diagnostic test for COVID-19 they will not test positive as a result of having the vaccination. Because vaccinations condition the body to produce antibodies in response to a viral infection, it is possible for a member to test positive for COVID-19 antibodies after they have received the vaccination.

If I'm planning on having a baby, do the experts recommend vaccination?

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists recommends vaccination for all people who may consider future pregnancy. The ACOG also notes that unfounded claims linking COVID-19 vaccines to infertility have been scientifically disproven.

Members with questions about getting vaccinated should have a discussion with their health care provider to make an informed decision.

Learn more at bcbsm.com/coronavirus.

*cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html

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