



# COVID-19 VACCINE

## Frequently Asked Questions

*New Yorkers with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in residential programs and the staff who support them have been prioritized to receive the first COVID-19 vaccines available. Below are answers to frequently asked questions as we prepare for vaccination.*

### 1 How do I know it's safe?

Each company's application to the FDA includes two months of follow-up safety data from Phase 3 of clinical trials conducted by universities and other independent bodies. In that phase, tens of thousands of volunteers got a vaccine and waited to see if they became infected, compared with others who received a placebo. By September, Pfizer's trial had 44,000 participants, and no serious safety concerns have been reported.

### 2 Can you get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

No. None of the current leading vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Janssen) contain whole SARS-CoV-2 virus. They cannot give you COVID-19.

### 3 When can I get vaccinated?

New Yorkers with I/DD living in certified residential settings and the staff who support them will be in the first group of people vaccinated against COVID-19. The state has begun to implement its vaccination plan. It is important that we are prepared to receive the vaccine as soon as it's available.

## **4** Where will I be vaccinated?

All residential sites will be connected with a point of distribution (POD) or pharmacy partnership program. Your provider or employer will support you in identifying your specific vaccination location.

## **5** What do I need to do to be vaccinated?

Everyone receiving a COVID-19 vaccine must have provide a completed consent form to the distribution site. If the individual receiving the vaccine cannot consent themselves, consent must be provided for them by an approved party. Sample consent forms can be found in the resources below.

## **6** How long will it take for the vaccine to work?

Based on clinical trial data, you will begin to have some protection about ten days after the first dose, but won't get the full protection from the vaccine until about a week after you receive the second dose. Even if you are fully vaccinated, you should continue to take precautions, like wearing a mask and washing your hands.

## **7** Is there a risk the supply will run out before I get my second dose?

If you are in the first group of people vaccinated, your booster shot will be set aside for you and won't be given to someone else. Operation Warp Speed, the federal effort to speed a vaccine to market, has said that once the first doses are given, the doses for the second shot will be set aside to be given three weeks later. It is important you receive your vaccine as soon as possible to ensure there is enough supply.

## **8** I had COVID-19. Do I still need to be vaccinated?

It's safe, and probably beneficial for anyone who has had COVID-19 to get the vaccine. Although people who have contracted the virus do have immunity, it is too soon to know how long it lasts. So for now, it makes sense for them to get vaccinated. People who have not had COVID-19 may be prioritized for vaccination.

## 9 What should I mention to my provider before I receive any shots?

It is recommended that you inform your vaccination provider about all medical conditions, including if you:

- have any allergies
- have a fever
- have a bleeding disorder or are on a blood-thinner
- are immunocompromised or are on a medicine that affects your immune system
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant
- are breastfeeding
- have received another COVID-19 vaccine

## 10 If I have allergies, should I be concerned?

People with severe allergies who have experienced anaphylaxis in the past should talk to their doctors about how to safely get the vaccine and what precautions to take. Fewer than one in a million recipients of other vaccines a year in the U.S. have an anaphylactic reaction. Among those who participated in the Pfizer trials, a very small number of people had allergic reactions.

## 11 Where can I learn more?

Additional information about COVID-19 Vaccination can be found at the links below.

- [OPWDD plain language flyer for people with I/DD](#)
- [OPWDD video about COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [New York State COVID-19 vaccine webpage](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Facts](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine informed consent form](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine consent form information sheet](#)

*This FAQ is intended to answer general questions about the COVID-19 vaccine. Details about the vaccination program are changing quickly. Please refer to current government guidance for the most up-to-date information and consult a physician before making decisions about vaccination.*