

## **BENEFITS SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH:** **COVID-19 Vaccines, continued**

In the face of COVID-19 every question about the vaccination is important. That's why we're addressing some of the uncertainties you may have about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine with facts from the CDC to help alleviate your concerns and arm you with the knowledge you deserve. Below are some frequently asked questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and what you need to know going forward.

**Notice:** The CDC and FDA have recommended a pause in the use of the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine in the United States out of an abundance of caution, effective Tuesday, April 13. Of the 6.8 million Janssen COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the United States to date, six cases of a type of blood clot called "cerebral venous sinus thrombosis" (CVST) were seen in combination with low levels of blood platelets. The CDC and the FDA are continuing to further review these cases and assess their potential significance.

For more information about COVID-19 topics and how the pandemic can affect you and your family, visit [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19). You can also contact your local health department or physician's office for additional COVID-19 vaccine information.

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### **Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?**

No. You have to be exposed to the novel coronavirus to get COVID-19. The currently authorized vaccines teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19.

### **Once I receive the COVID-19 vaccine, will I be immune for life, or will I need to receive future COVID-19 vaccinations?**

At this time, it's still unknown how long immunity from the COVID-19 vaccine will last and whether it will need to be administered more than once, or even on a regular basis, like the flu shot.

### **Will the vaccine work for everyone?**

The COVID-19 vaccines currently available were proven to be highly effective across diverse races and genders. So, across the U.S., every family and neighborhood can expect the same effectiveness and protection.

### **Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?**

The COVID-19 vaccine will not alter your DNA, and none of the approved vaccines interact with your DNA. The approved Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines; they contain a bit of RNA (ribonucleic acid) that teaches the cells of the body how to make a protein that causes the immune system to make COVID-19 antibodies. At the end of the process, our bodies have learned how to protect us against future infection with the virus that causes COVID-19. Viral vectors cannot cause infection with the virus used as the vaccine vector.

### **If I get the vaccine, are there any side effects?**

After vaccination, some people may develop a fever, muscle aches, headache, and/or fatigue. These side effects are related to the activation of the immune system. In most persons they last 1-2 days and don't require treatment.

### **Why do I need the vaccine if everyone around me is getting it?**

Herd immunity and community protection is the ultimate goal, right? Yes, but that's achieved when a large portion of our entire population has been vaccinated. Current estimates are that at least 85% of our population will need to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Many adults have medical conditions that will prevent them from getting the vaccine even if they want it. So, it's up to us to keep them protected by doing our part and getting the vaccine for them.

### **Is the vaccine free?**

Yes. The cost of vaccine administration is covered under your health plan. You won't pay anything to receive the vaccine. Don't forget to bring your member ID card when you go to get your vaccine.

**Benefits at work  
for you!**

The vaccine supply will increase in the months ahead and many other vaccines are still being developed. Please be sure to contact your health care provider or medical plan for further questions.

**BCBS Members:** Call 1-833-212-0851 or sign on to [www.MyHealthToolkitFL.com](http://www.MyHealthToolkitFL.com)

**Kaiser Members:** Call 1-866-454-8855 or sign on to [www.kp.org](http://www.kp.org)