

# Essential tips from physicians on COVID-19 vaccines

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There are three COVID-19 vaccines—those made by Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech—currently available in the United States. All three COVID-19 vaccine choices are safe and very effective in protecting individuals from serious outcomes of the disease such as hospitalization, intensive care or death.

But it is not the vaccines that will stop the pandemic. It is the act of vaccination that will.

COVID-19 vaccination dramatically cuts the risk of acquiring SARS-CoV-2, but being vaccinated does not mean it's time to throw caution to the wind. Everyone must continue to follow proper precautionary measures such as wearing a mask, physical distancing, avoiding crowds and handwashing. Learn more from the AMA about eight coronavirus tips that doctors wish patients would follow.

The AMA's "What Doctors Wish Patients Knew™" series provides physicians a platform to share what they want patients to understand about today's health care headlines, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 96% of U.S. physicians have gotten vaccinated against COVID-19, and the AMA supports vaccine requirements for health care workers and among public and private sectors.

Here is a list of stories from this series on what doctors wish patients knew about the impact of COVID-19 vaccination.

**1**

## **Know what to expect with vaccination**

In an effort to end the pandemic, there is an ongoing and urgent need for more people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Currently, anyone 12 years of age and older is eligible and recommended to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. But as people gear up for a COVID-19 vaccine, physicians want patients to know what to expect when it is their turn.

## **2** **COVID-19 vaccination's safe for kids 12 and older**

As soon as Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine was OK'd for ages 12–15, appointment slots were quick to fill with at least 600,000 having received their first dose since being authorized. But while many parents have jumped at the opportunity to get their children vaccinated, some are still hesitant. Find out the facts from physician experts.

## **3** **Follow precautions after vaccination**

After you have gotten your second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or one dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, when will your life get back to normal? While a vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 feels like the light at the end of a long, dark tunnel, the return to normal will be cautious and slow. Physicians clear up what to expect after being fully vaccinated.

## **4** **The Delta variant can impact efficacy**

Many people are eager to return to some sort of normalcy again. But experts warn not to let your guard down just yet because of the quick spreading and contagious COVID-19 Delta variant. The variant was first identified in India in December and soon spread to Great Britain. Once the Delta variant reached the United States, it spread rapidly and

continues to fuel new outbreaks, mainly among the unvaccinated.

## **5 Breakthrough infections can occur**

The three COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States are doing exactly what they were meant to do: protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. But with the more dangerous Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 spreading rapidly, the U.S. is seeing more COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough infections. Here's what patients should know about COVID-19 vaccination and breakthrough infections.

## **6 We're a long way from herd immunity**

Some epidemiologists have estimated that 70% of the worldwide population would need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to establish herd immunity against the disease that's already killed over 650,000 Americans. But, with the Delta variant driving up cases among the unvaccinated as well as causing breakthrough COVID-19 infections, the threshold for herd immunity now seems to be higher. To clear up confusion, here is what patients need to know about herd immunity.

## **7 Keep unvaccinated kids safe**

For parents with kids 11 and younger, returning to a sense of normalcy might be limited as they are left wondering which activities they can safely do together when not everyone in the family is vaccinated against COVID-19.

Read about an ob-gyn who is working to sway vaccine-hesitant pregnant patients.

The AMA has developed frequently-asked-questions documents on COVID-19 vaccination covering safety, allocation and distribution, administration and more. There are two FAQs, one designed to answer patients' questions (PDF), and another to address physicians' COVID-19 vaccine questions (PDF).