



## COVID-19 VACCINE FAQs

The Operating Engineers Health Local 139 Health Benefit Fund realizes that members, their family members, and employers have questions about COVID-19 vaccines. Below are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions. Please call the Fund office at 262-549-9190 if you have additional questions.

### **What vaccines have been approved?**

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued emergency use authorization (EUA) for COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advisory committee also officially recommended the vaccines.

### **Who will be the first to get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

The State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is responsible for determining the order in which people will be vaccinated in Wisconsin. As of March 1, 2021, the following groups were eligible to be vaccinated:

- Frontline health care personnel
- Residents in skilled nursing or long-term care facilities
- Fire, police and corrections personnel
- People 65 years and older
- Educators and childcare providers
- Medicaid long-term care individuals
- Some public-facing essential workers
- Non-frontline health care personnel
- Congregate living residents and staff

### **Will children be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Each vaccine has different age guidelines. Check with your health care provider for the most current guidance.

### **How do I find out when I can get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

DHS decides when each group may be vaccinated. To find out when you may be eligible, visit [DHS COVID-19](#) or contact your primary care provider.

### **Where can I get a vaccine once they are widely available to the public?**

For each group that is eligible, DHS has information on where vaccines are being offered, [DHS COVID-19](#). Your primary health care provider should also have information on vaccination sites.

### **Do I have to go to an in-network pharmacy to get a vaccine?**

No. Once widely available to the public, you can get a COVID-19 vaccine at most pharmacies. You do not need a prescription to get a vaccine.

### **Will there be any out-of-pocket costs for the COVID-19 vaccine?**

No. The Fund's Summary Plan Description (Plan) already covers immunizations at 100%. There will be no cost to you for a COVID-19 vaccine.

### **How many doses of the vaccine do I need?**

You need 2 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Get a second shot 3 weeks after your first to get the most protection.

Moderna has a vaccine that is 2 shots spaced 3-4 weeks apart.

Johnson & Johnson has a vaccine that is a single shot dose.



### **Do I have to get 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Currently, both the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are two doses. If you forget or choose not to get the second dose, the vaccine may be less effective. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a single shot dose.

### **How long will the COVID-19 vaccine protect me?**

At this time, it is not known how long the vaccine can protect you. Data is limited and research is ongoing.

### **Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have already been infected?**

The CDC recommends getting a COVID-19 vaccine even if you have been infected.

Health officials will keep the public informed with more details.

### **Should I get a flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes. The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are for different illnesses. A seasonal flu shot will not protect you from COVID-19. Getting both vaccines will help protect you the most.

### **How effective is the vaccine?**

In clinical trials, the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines had at or above a 90% effective rate. In clinical trials, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine has a 66% effective rate.

### **Are there side effects?**

The CDC website, [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), is the best resource for COVID-19 information. Side effects from COVID-19 vaccines could include pain at the injection site, fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and/or joint pain.

### **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?**

For FDA EUA, the known benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine must outweigh the known risks. The COVID-19 vaccines have been studied in large clinical trials

where over 40,000 individuals received the vaccine. Most people experienced some pain at the site of the injection, and after the vaccination, some people experience a short period of flu-like symptoms (fatigue, headache, fever). In addition to the FDA, a group of experts in vaccine safety have reviewed the data from clinical trials. The CDC will closely monitor the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Who should I contact if I have a problem or side effects after I get a vaccine?**

If you have a severe reaction after the COVID-19 vaccine, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital. Call your vaccination provider or healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects that bothers you or will not go away.

### **Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have had severe allergic reactions to other vaccines?**

Talk with your vaccination provider or healthcare provider about past reactions to vaccines.

### **Where can I go to get more information?**

- FDA's Pfizer/BioNTech [Fact Sheet](#)
- FDA's Moderna [Fact Sheet](#)
- FDA's Johnson & Johnson [Fact Sheet](#)
- CDC's [COVID-19 Vaccines Page](#)
- CDC's [COVID-19 General Website](#)