Vaccine Myths and Facts

MYTH: The protection you get from being sick with COVID-19 is better than getting a vaccine.

FACT: The best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 is to stay up to date with your vaccines.

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States are effective at preventing COVID-19 and are very effective at preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death.

You do get some protection against COVID-19 after you've been infected. This is called "natural immunity." But it is hard to know how protected you are from natural immunity. The level of protection you get from being sick with COVID-19 depends on factors like how serious your illness was, how long ago you were sick, and your age.

MYTH: COVID-19 vaccines cause fertility problems.

FACT: There is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

Doctors recommend COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant, or might become pregnant in the future. Research suggests the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine outweigh any known or potential risks of vaccination during pregnancy. In fact, people who are pregnant or recently pregnant are more likely to get seriously sick with COVID-19 when compared to people who are not pregnant.

MYTH: Children will have long-term side effects after getting the vaccine.

FACT: Research shows that COVID-19 vaccines are safe for children.

No serious safety concerns have been identified among children who got vaccinated against COVID-19. Children may have some side effects similar to what adults experience (like fatigue, fever, or pain at the site of injection), but these are normal and will go away. History shows us that when there are delayed effects following vaccination, they almost always happen within two months of vaccination. This is because vaccines do not stay in the body for a long time. They cause your immune system to respond, so that it can fight off an infection later. Then, they break down and leave the body.

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MYTH: You need to wait 90 days after being sick with COVID-19 to get vaccinated or to get a booster dose.

FACT: If you get sick or receive treatment for COVID-19, you must complete your isolation period before getting vaccinated.

If you get sick with COVID-19, you must meet criteria to complete your isolation period before getting a booster dose. This means:

• You have no symptoms, or your symptoms have improved **AND**

• You are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **AND**

• You did not have severe illness

If you got a COVID-19 treatment, like MABS or oral antivirals, you don't need to wait to get vaccinated but must complete your isolation period first.

How to Identify Misinformation[1]:

1. **Look at the source.** Is the source a website or a person known for mixing FACTS and OPINIONS? Is the post anonymous? Does the author have credentials or expertise?

2. **Look at the date.** Is the article recent or was it published a long time ago?

3. **Look at the data.** Are there data to support a person's claims?

4. **Think about motivation.** Is the person trying to get more views or "likes?" Is the person selling something?

5. **Use fact checking resources**. If you are still unsure, look at sites like FactCheck.org or Snopes.com.

6. **Arm yourself with the facts.** Rely on professional and expert sources like the Immunization Action Coalition, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more on how to identify misinformation, visit:

• How to Spot Misinformation, Stronger:
  https://stronger.org/resources/how-to-spot-misinformation

• Dissecting Social Media: What You Should Know, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:
  www.chop.edu/news/feature-article-dissecting-social-media-what-you-should-know

• Evaluating Health Information, University of California San Francisco:
  https://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/evaluating-health-information

[1] https://stronger.org/resources/how-to-spot-misinformation

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