

# Frequently Asked Questions

## about COVID-19 vaccines and boosters

### Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Yes, we strongly recommend that you get a vaccine. **Because dialysis patients are high risk, the vaccine is even more important.** However, it is your choice. Similar to the flu shot, the vaccine can help minimize the severity of the illness if you do get it. Talk to your DaVita care team if you have questions.

### Are the vaccines safe? Do they work?

- Yes, the vaccines are **safe**. They have been given to millions of people across the world of different races, ethnicities, and health backgrounds including those with kidney disease.
- While no vaccine is 100% effective at preventing COVID-19, vaccines provide the best protection against serious illness and death from COVID-19.

### When and where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine or booster?

- You can get a Pfizer COVID-19 booster vaccine at your DaVita center or in your community. Speak with a DaVita care team member to get your updated booster!
- If you received a vaccine outside of your DaVita center, be sure to let your care team know.
- If you received a vaccine outside of the U.S., let your doctor know.

### Which vaccine should I get? Do I have a choice?

- Talk with your doctor if you have specific questions about which vaccine is best for you.

### How many doses of the vaccine are needed to be effective?

- The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require 2 doses to be protected, and the J&J vaccine requires 1 dose.
- You may not be fully protected against COVID-19 until 2 weeks after the final dose.
- Booster doses provide additional protection against COVID-19 and the newer variants. We recommend getting a booster shot when you are eligible.



## **What side effects can I expect after receiving the vaccine? Can it give me COVID-19?**

- The vaccines may result in mild side effects, such as pain at the injection site and feeling tired, which are normal and expected with vaccination.
- It is impossible for you to get sick with COVID-19 from the vaccine itself.

## **Can I get a vaccine if I have a weakened immune system because of other health conditions? What if I received a transplant?**

- Yes, the vaccines are safe for patients with these health conditions and for dialysis patients like you. Because your body is less capable of building immunity, we recommend you talk with your doctor before receiving the vaccine.

## **How effective are the COVID-19 vaccines against new variants of the virus?**

- COVID-19 vaccines continue to reduce your risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to severe COVID-19 infection, including variants.
- By combining vaccinations with practices like masking and social distancing, we can protect ourselves and others from getting sick and reduce the chance that other variants emerge.

## **How long does protection from the vaccine last?**

- While we don't know exactly how long COVID-19 vaccine protection lasts, we know that protection can decrease over time. This is why we recommend staying up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccinations to keep your immunity against COVID-19 strong.
- Talk with your doctor about when you should receive another dose.

## **Are boosters the same as existing COVID-19 vaccines?**

- The updated booster is very similar to the original vaccines. This updated booster has additional protection against the recent Omicron variants of COVID-19. An updated booster will help your immune system fight off a wider variety of variants.

## **Do I have to take the same type of booster as my original vaccine?**

- No, you are allowed to "mix and match" vaccine type. This means you can choose which COVID-19 vaccine you receive as a booster, even if it is different than what you were first vaccinated with.



## **Can my care partner get a vaccine or booster at my clinic?**

- At this time, DaVita is only providing the updated booster for DaVita patients. We encourage care partners and members of the general public to get vaccinated in their communities.

While we strongly recommend getting vaccinated, **it is your choice.**  
Our goal is to help keep you as safe and healthy as possible!