



Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccines

How are vaccines prioritized? Who will be able to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Oregon's COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee determines the order of vaccine prioritizations. The committee prioritized people who are most at risk of severe illness and hardest hit by the COVID-19 virus.

The Vaccine Advisory Committee has recommended that all Oregonians 16 and older should be eligible for the vaccine by July 1, 2021. You can view Oregon's Vaccine Sequencing Infographic at covidvaccine.oregon.gov

Please note: All vaccine distribution depends on the availability of the vaccine in Oregon.

Equity in vaccine distribution

As COVID-19 vaccine availability increases, Oregon Health Authority (OHA) will continue to ensure the distribution process is based on an equitable system challenging the roles of power, privilege and racism—informed by the COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee.

Benton County is committed to ensuring that equitable distribution of the vaccine occurs in our community.

Who will be vaccinated next?

People in Phase 1b groups are next to be vaccinated:

As the Vaccine Advisory Committee continues to work through sequencing phases, prioritizing groups based on health equity, the Oregon Health Authority projects that all Oregonians 16 and older will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine no later than July 1, 2021. Find out more about the vaccine sequencing schedule at covidvaccine.oregon.gov.

When can I get vaccinated?

Please visit getvaccinated.oregon.gov to find a personalized, interactive tool that tells you if you're eligible to get a vaccine based on your age and occupation, and where you can get a vaccine based on your local county resources.

Oregonians can also text, email or call to be directed to vaccination events.

- Text ORCOVID to 898211 to get text/SMS updates (English and Spanish) or email ORCOVID@211info.org.
- Call 211 or 1-866-698-6155 (open 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. daily, including holidays). There is an option to get a call back rather than wait on hold (English and Spanish). Free interpretation is available for all other languages. TTY: Dial 711 or call 1-866-698-6155.

Where can I get vaccinated?

Vaccines are available through healthcare providers, local health departments and retail pharmacies.

Oregon has activated a federal pharmacy program that allows eligible people to obtain COVID-19 vaccinations from retail pharmacies, such as the following:

- Albertsons Companies (includes Safeway)
- Costco
- Health Mart
- Rite Aid
- Walgreens
- Fred Meyer

The allocations to retail pharmacies will be in addition to Oregon's state allocation.

Oregon Health Authority continues to pursue state-level partnerships to expand retail pharmacy options for Oregonians.

I am not currently eligible for the vaccine; can I wait around for leftover doses at a vaccination clinic?

Currently, vaccination clinics in Benton County require appointments for all participants. Upcoming clinics are planned based on the availability of vaccines and appointments are filled based on vaccine supply. Benton County does not recommend that community members wait around for leftover doses.

Can I "cross county lines" to obtain a vaccine?

Local clinics that are open to Benton County residents, will be listed on the Benton County COVID-19 website. Eligibility requirements will vary from clinic to clinic. Community members should check in advance to determine if clinics are open to Benton County residents.

How much does the vaccine cost?

Currently, vaccine doses are given to everyone at no cost. However, some vaccination providers may charge an administration fee for giving the shot.

Once I get vaccinated, how long until I am protected?

It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines require two doses and will not become fully effective until two weeks after your second dose. The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine requires only one dose, and becomes fully effective two weeks after that dose.

I have had COVID before; Do I still need to be vaccinated?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest that people who have already gotten sick with COVID-19 may benefit from the vaccine:

- It is possible for someone who has already had COVID-19 to be reinfected, though this is not common.
- At this time, we do not know how long natural immunity to COVID-19 — the protection that results from having been sick — lasts.
- We also do not know how long individuals that receive the vaccine are immune to the virus.
- Benton County Health Department recommends people who have had the COVID-19 virus wait until they are out of their isolation period before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Is the vaccine safe and effective?

Scientists were able to create and test a vaccine quickly. Tens of thousands of people — including Oregonians — from many backgrounds, ages and communities of color, participated in COVID-19 vaccine studies before the vaccines gained approval by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which requires rigorous safety testing before it evaluates any vaccine for approval.

- The Moderna vaccine is 94% effective two weeks after a person receives the second dose.
- The Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective two weeks after the second dose.
- The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is 66% effective two weeks after a single dose.

What does Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) mean?

During a public health emergency, like a pandemic, the FDA can allow the use of certain life-saving drugs and treatments through Emergency Use Authorization.

Can I pick which vaccine I get?

At this time, the vaccine provided at clinics is determined by what Oregon Health Authority has given to the County. Because of this, individuals cannot choose which vaccine they receive.

Can I get just one dose of the vaccine?

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses to be most effective. Receiving only one dose of these vaccines will not provide you with the desired level of immunity. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine only requires one dose to achieve the full effectiveness.

It is important that you get the same vaccine brand for both doses. Don't mix and match. Do not mix the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine with either Moderna or Pfizer vaccines.

When scheduling your first dose, you should also make a plan to receive your second dose. For clinics hosted by Benton County, the date for your second dose will be scheduled when you are scheduling your first, and the brand you received will be taken into account.

Who will know if I get vaccinated?

Vaccination providers may enter your vaccination information in your state/local jurisdiction's Immunization Information System (IIS) or other designated system. This will ensure that you receive the same vaccine when you return for the second dose. For more information about IISs, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/prgrams/iis/about.html>.

Can my organization provide vaccines to our staff?

If your agency is part of the following groups, they are encouraged to sign up as a COVID-19 vaccine provider. This can include:

- Agencies with currently enrolled Vaccines for Children and public access providers, including those within the Oregon Department of Corrections.
- Local Public Health Authorities.
- The Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, the Academy of Family Physicians, community-based organizations who work with critical populations, the Coalition for Community Health Clinics and Oregon Primary Care Association.
- Coordinated Care Organizations, which are contracted by OHA to provide health services for Medicaid members.

When can life return to normal?

We don't know yet when we'll be able to stop wearing masks and maintaining physical distance, but as more people are vaccinated, we move closer to having life return to normal.

- The vaccine will help protect you from getting sick, but it still may be possible to get, carry and transmit the virus.
- Preventing illness and severe illness is an important reason to get vaccinated. It will also take time for us to get everyone vaccinated
- When the spread of disease is low enough, these additional protective measures can be stopped.
- The County will communicate changes to protective measures as they occur.

Questions?

Call: 541-766-6120

Visit: co.benton.or.us/covid19

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*every day.***