

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: THE COVID-19 VACCINES

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## HOW DO I KNOW THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE?

Each approved vaccine has completed three levels of trials, involving tens of thousands of volunteers. Although mild side effects (like pain at the injection site lasting less than a day, or feeling “off” for a day or so) is common, severe allergic reactions are very rare, about 2 for every million people. This is monitored very carefully. For example, in one trial, two people in England had a possible severe side effect: they stopped the trial until they could be sure it wasn't caused by the vaccine.

## WILL I NEED TO GET COVID-19 VACCINES EACH YEAR LIKE I DO FOR THE FLU?

We don't know if we will need to get a new vaccine every year. It depends on how much the virus changes. SARS-CoV-2 is less changeable than the flu virus, but more than some other viruses. It's still a young virus in humans, so we will have to wait and see. Influenza has many ways of changing that SARS-CoV-2 does not, so hopefully one round of vaccines will be enough!

## HOW DO I TALK TO LOVED ONES WHO DO NOT WANT TO GET THE VACCINE?

1. Listen
2. Understand
3. Talk about why it's important.
4. Discuss how they feel about it.
5. Repeat

If your loved ones are worried about getting the vaccine, they may have one of several different concerns. The best way to talk to someone about it is to make sure they have been heard and understood, then talk to them about why you think the vaccine is important. Some concerns can be factually dealt with (for example, the vaccines do not change your DNA or contain aborted fetuses), but most of the time hitting people with facts will not change their minds. If they are heard, understood, and cared about, they will be more likely to listen to you what you have to say. Remember to discuss ideas, not attack people. Calling someone stupid or blind only causes them to become defensive.