

## Who is eligible to receive the vaccine now?

- Phase 1a: Residents of long-term care and assisted living facilities, as well as health care personnel.
- Phase 1b: Anyone 70 or older, first responders, and K-12 personnel.

As of February 15, the current COVID-19 vaccination priority remains phase 1b persons aged 70 or older. All vaccination sites are asked to prioritize this population until further notice.

Other persons from phases 1a and 1b remain eligible for vaccination.

As vaccine quantities and available appointment times allow, persons in phase 1c with an emphasis on those aged 60 and older may also be scheduled to ensure each vaccination site administers 90% or more of all doses received within 7 days of arrival.

### **What occupations are considered essential workers in Phase 1c?**

The list is quite long, but grocery store workers, public transit workers, and service providers for vulnerable populations, among others. To view the full list, visit [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov) and click on the latest Vaccine Phases Update.

### **What are the conditions that the CDC considers high-risk for Covid-19, and therefore, eligible for a vaccine during Phase 1c?**

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Down Syndrome
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

**How are underserved geographic areas being addressed? In some areas, there is a lot of distance between where the caller is and available locations. Callers complain about driving to far-away locations.**

Kentucky is employing both regional vaccine sites and local community sites in its vaccine distribution plan. Our goal, when the vaccine supply has grown large enough to accommodate it, is to ensure that persons have to drive no more than one county away to receive their vaccine. We are also exploring ways to get the vaccines to persons who cannot travel.

# What are vaccines? How do they work?

## What are antibodies?

Antibodies are proteins made in response to infections. Antibodies are detected in the blood of people who are tested after an infection. Antibodies show the body's efforts to fight off the infection. Antibodies usually start to develop within 1 to 3 weeks after infection.

## What is a vaccine?

Vaccines expose the body to fragments of a virus so the body's immune system is trained to produce protective antibodies much like it would if you were exposed to the disease. Vaccines, though, only use small pieces of the virus or otherwise stimulate our bodies to produce small pieces of the virus that produce protective antibodies but are incapable of causing infection. After getting vaccinated, you develop immunity to that disease without actually getting sick with the disease itself.

This is what makes vaccines such powerful medicine. Unlike most medicines, which treat or cure diseases, vaccines prevent them.

## What is mRNA?

Messenger RNA vaccines, also known as mRNA vaccines, are some of the first COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines are a new type of vaccine to help protect against infectious diseases. mRNA vaccines do NOT involve a weakened or inactivated germ into or bodies. Instead, they teach our cells how to make a protein – or even a piece of a protein – that triggers an immune response in our bodies. This immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

## Can mRNA vaccines change the DNA of a person?

No, mRNA is active only in a cell's cytoplasm and DNA is located in the nucleus; mRNA vaccines do not operate in the same cellular compartment that DNA is located and therefore are not able to change DNA.

## How effective are the vaccines against the new, more contagious strains of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19?

Scientists are working to learn more about these variants to better understand how easily they might be transmitted and the effectiveness of currently authorized vaccines against them. Early data shows that the first two vaccines may not be as effective but still provide very good protection from severe COVID-19 disease and that makes the make the vaccines definitely worth getting.

## Are two masks better than one, especially given the new, more contagious strains that have arrived in Kentucky?

The best advice is to follow the public health guidance to wear a single close-fitting mask, wash your hands frequently, maintain six feet of distance between yourself and others who aren't members of your household, and stay home as much as possible. Generally, those who follow this advice gain little

benefit from wearing a second mask. For persons who must work in confined spaces for extended periods of time with other persons who are not members of their own households, wearing two masks or a single, 3-layer mask may provide some additional protection.

### **Will there be enough COVID-19 vaccines for everyone?**

Initially, no. The newly approved vaccines are very limited in quantity at the start. National efforts are underway to rapidly expand the supply of vaccines, however, and the goal is for everyone to be able to easily get a COVID-19 vaccine as larger quantities are available. As vaccine quantities increase, hundreds of additional providers will begin to administer the vaccine.

### **How many doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?**

The mRNA vaccines require two doses. For the Pfizer vaccine, doses should be separated by 3 weeks. For Moderna's vaccine, doses should be separated by 28 days. The two mRNA vaccines are not interchangeable per the United States Food and Drug Administration. A person should be sure they know which one they received for the first dose and be clear about when they should return for the second dose, particularly because the vaccines require both doses to have maximum protection.

### **What if I miss my second dose?**

It is important that you receive your second dose. The COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses are not completely effective unless you receive the second dose. You should ask to schedule your second dose at the time you receive your initial dose. If you miss your second dose, reach out to the provider for recommendation of next steps.

According to the CDC, the second dose should be administered as close to the recommended interval as possible. However, if it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval, the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines may be scheduled for administration up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose.

**I got my first dose of the vaccine in another state (or country) and cannot return there for my second dose. How can I get my second dose in Kentucky?**

If you received your first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine more than 100 miles outside of the Kentucky border and are unable to return for the second dose, you may request assistance by completing the “COVID-19 Vaccine Unsupported Second Dose Assistance” form at <https://redcap.chfs.ky.gov/surveys/?s=MJ8CDF9AMK>. Applicants will be required to upload a picture of their photo ID and COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card. Submissions will be monitored and reviewed daily with a response from KDPH within 72 hours.

**I received my first dose while a patient at a long-term care facility and missed my second dose. Where do I go for help scheduling my second dose?**

Persons who received their first dose through the federal LTCF vaccine program may request assistance by completing the “COVID-19 Vaccine Unsupported Second Dose Assistance” form at <https://redcap.chfs.ky.gov/surveys/?s=MJ8CDF9AMK>. Applicants will be required to upload a picture of their photo ID and COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card. Submissions will be monitored and reviewed daily with a response from KDPH within 72 hours.

Coordination for unsupported second doses will occur directly between a KDPH and a representative from the regional vaccination administration site located near the person’s residence.

**What if I get COVID-19 between my first and second dose of the vaccine?**

If you came down with COVID-19 after getting the first dose of your vaccine but before receiving your second dose, or booster shot, you should wait to get the second dose until after your symptoms have subsided and you have completed the 10-day required isolation period since the symptoms began.

NOTE: For those persons who previously received passive antibody therapy (e.g., Regeneron, Eli Lilly antibody therapy, monoclonal antibodies) for COVID-19: Vaccination should be deferred for at least 90 days afterward.

**Are the COVID-19 vaccines being studied to use on children?**

Yes. Studies of COVID-19 vaccines in children have started. The Pfizer mRNA vaccine was tested in some 16- to 18-year-olds and has been approved for teens in this age group. As more information becomes available in younger children and teens, the age-related recommendations will be adjusted. It is important that COVID-19 vaccines are thoroughly tested in children and adolescents younger than 18 years to ensure safety in this younger population whose bodies are still rapidly developing and therefore differ from fully matured adults. This is a normal part of the vaccine development process and most vaccines are tested with adults first.

**Will the COVID-19 vaccine be an annual shot?**

We don’t know yet. Scientists are still studying this and will determine this once the vaccine is distributed and more data becomes available.

### **How many people need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before we achieve herd immunity?**

Experts estimate at least 70 – 80% of Americans would need to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely that a virus or bacteria can effectively spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.

## **Are COVID-19 vaccines free? Do you need insurance? Do you have to live in Kentucky? Do you have to be a U.S. citizen?**

### **How much does the COVID-19 vaccine cost?**

Vaccine purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. Your insurance may be billed for an office visit or administration fee for administration of the vaccine; however, you cannot be turned away from receiving the vaccine due to lack of payment.

### **Are organizations that administer the Covid-19 vaccine allowed to bill your insurance company for an administration fee?**

The federal government is purchasing the COVID-19 vaccine for U.S residents. Vaccine sites are permitted to bill Medicare, Medicaid, or other health insurance plans to recover the cost of administering the vaccine, but the federal government has required that patients incur no out-of-pocket cost for either getting the shot or for the vaccine itself.

### **If I am vaccinated during the course of a medical appointment for other purposes, might I be responsible for an office visit fee?**

Yes, based on your health insurance coverage, you may have an out-of-pocket cost for a medical office visit. But the federal government has required that patients incur no out-of-pocket cost for the vaccine or its administration.

### **Do you need to have insurance to get the COVID-19 vaccine? If you don't, how much will the vaccine cost per dose?**

Vaccine purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. Your insurance may be billed for an office visit or administration fee, but you cannot be turned away from receiving the vaccine due to lack of insurance or payment.

## Do you have to be a resident of Kentucky to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Each state receives a vaccine allocation based on its population. The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services has directed that every vaccine provider in Kentucky shall ensure each vaccine recipient is either:

1. A resident of the Commonwealth of Kentucky able to demonstrate residency consistent with the requirements of KRS 186.010(12), or
2. An individual providing health care services involving direct care to patients in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

## Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

### Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

Yes. For all vaccines in the United States, there is an extensive development and approval process, and no safety steps were skipped during the development of these vaccines. COVID-19 vaccines are held to the same standards as other vaccines to make sure they are safe. Additionally, active monitoring continues, as is the case for all immunizations, to ensure ongoing safety.

### What steps are taken to ensure safety after a vaccine is approved?

After a vaccine is approved and distributed, vaccine monitoring systems are used to watch for possible side effects. If an unexpected side effect is seen, experts study it to determine whether changes are needed in vaccine recommendations. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) is a national vaccine safety surveillance program of the FDA and CDC. VAERS collects and analyzes information from reports of adverse events (e.g., side effects) that occur after a vaccine has been approved and distributed. Anyone can submit a report to VAERS by going to this link: <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

There is also a new smartphone app recently introduced for the COVID-19 vaccines. **V-safe** is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through **v-safe**, you can quickly tell the CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information. And **v-safe** will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose. To learn more, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

### What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

The side effects will vary slightly from person to person and depending on which vaccine you receive. Most reported side effects are consistent with other vaccines. For example, vaccine injections may cause mild flu-like side effects — including soreness at the injection site, headaches, muscle aches and fever.

These symptoms do not mean you have been infected with COVID-19, but they do indicate your immune system has begun working to make the cells and proteins necessary to protect you from severe illness if you are exposed to COVID-19.

### **What if I am concerned about my side effects?**

If you experience severe side effects, please seek medical attention immediately. If you would like to report your side effects to the federal reporting system, please visit:

<https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

### **Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?**

No, it is not possible to get COVID-19 from vaccines. To trigger an immune response, some vaccines for other diseases put a weakened or inactivated virus into our bodies. This does not happen with Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines for COVID-19. Instead, they teach our cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from being infected if the real virus enters our bodies. Because you may still be able to spread COVID-19, however, the Kentucky Department of Public Health recommends that you still cover your mouth and nose with a mask, wash your hands often, and stay at least 6 feet away from others who do not live in your household.

### **Will COVID-19 vaccines cause me to test positive on COVID-19 tests?**

No. These vaccines will not cause you to test positive on viral tests.

### **Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or currently breastfeeding?**

There are currently no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in lactating women or the effects of mRNA vaccines on the breastfed infant or milk production / excretion. mRNA vaccines are not considered live virus vaccines and are not thought to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant. If a lactating woman is part of a group (e.g., health care personnel) who is recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, she may choose to be vaccinated. Also, there is little data on these mRNA vaccines in pregnant women. However, we recommend pregnant or breastfeeding women seek guidance from their health care provider regarding your specific medical situation.

### **Can mRNA vaccines change the DNA of a person?**

No, mRNA is active only in a cell's cytoplasm and DNA is located in the nucleus; mRNA vaccines do not operate in the same cellular compartment that DNA is located and therefore are not able to change DNA.

### **Were steps skipped to provide COVID-19 vaccines faster?**

Even though the COVID-19 vaccines were developed quicker than has ever been done in the past, the speed did not decrease safety. The steps that were shortened were accomplished by the federal government removing financial risk from vaccine manufacturers so they could proceed with multiple steps at the same time instead of doing them one at a time.

### **Do the COVID-19 vaccines contain a microchip?**

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain microchips. This idea is based on a false narrative and misinformation campaign waged online.

## Recipient Fact Sheets

Moderna: <https://www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua/eua-fact-sheet-recipients.pdf>

Pfizer: <https://selfservehosteu.pfizer.com/pfrrdownload/file/fid/77411>

### **If I cannot take a flu shot due to an egg allergy, can I receive the Covid-19 vaccine (either Pfizer or Moderna)?**

Both brands (Pfizer and Moderna) are cell-based vaccines (RNA). Therefore, they do not contain any human or animal cells in their development. Since they aren't grown in eggs like some flu vaccines, you should be safe.

However, if you have experienced an allergic reaction to any prior vaccine or injectable medication other than a rash, you should discuss it your health care provider first and receive the vaccine in a setting that is prepared for medical intervention (doctor's office, etc.).

### **Will I be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?**

If possible, people should separate their COVID-19 vaccinations by at least 14 days from any other vaccine (before or after). This recommendation is based on the fact that we currently do not have data regarding whether the COVID-19 vaccines will affect, or be affected by, other vaccines.

Studies to determine whether COVID-19 vaccines can be given with the flu vaccine or the shingles vaccine will be completed; these types of studies are called "concomitant use studies."

### **Are the COVID-19 vaccines being studied to use on children?**

Yes. Studies of COVID-19 vaccines in children have started. The Pfizer mRNA vaccine was tested in some 16- to 18-year-olds and has been approved for teens in this age group. As more information becomes available in younger children and teens, the age-related recommendations will be adjusted.

It is important that COVID-19 vaccines are thoroughly tested in children and adolescents younger than 18 years to ensure safety in this younger population whose bodies are still rapidly developing and therefore differ from fully matured adults. This is a normal part of the vaccine development process and most vaccines are tested with adults first.

### **If I have an autoimmune or immune-compromising condition, can I be vaccinated for COVID-19?**

People with immune-compromising conditions may get the COVID-19 vaccine as long as they are not in one of the following categories:

- Severe allergy to a vaccine component (i.e., one that causes anaphylaxis or requires medical intervention)
- History of severe allergy to any vaccine or injectable medication

However, it is recommended that individuals with compromised immune systems discuss their personal risks and benefits with a health care provider to determine whether to receive the vaccine. Data about

how well the vaccine works and its safety in immune-compromised individuals are not currently available, so it is possible that these individuals could have a lower immune response to vaccination. On the other hand, persons with these conditions may also be at higher risk of severe disease due to COVID-19. Therefore, the CDC recommended that people who are immune-compromised or taking immunosuppressive medications could receive the vaccine if they wanted as long as they do not have other contraindications.

If someone with an immune-compromising condition decides to get vaccinated, it will be particularly important for them to receive both doses and practice other public health measures until more is known about their protection against COVID-19. Post-licensure monitoring systems, like the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) and the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD), will allow for real-time monitoring of these sub-groups.

If you experience severe side effects, please seek medical attention immediately. If you would like to report your side effects to the federal reporting system, please visit: <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

## Should I be vaccinated?

### **If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, will I still need a vaccine?**

Vaccination should be offered to persons regardless of history of prior symptomatic or asymptomatic COVID-19 infection.

Vaccination of persons with known current COVID-19 infection should be postponed until the person has recovered from the acute illness (if the person had symptoms) and criteria have been met for them to discontinue isolation.

Additionally, while there is no recommended minimum interval between infection and vaccination, current evidence suggests that reinfection is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. Thus, persons with documented acute COVID-19 infection in the preceding 90 days may delay vaccination until near the end of this period, if desired.

NOTE: For those persons who previously received passive antibody therapy (e.g., Regeneron, Eli Lilly antibody therapy, monoclonal antibodies) for COVID-19: Vaccination should be deferred for at least 90 days afterward.

### **How long will COVID-19 vaccine immunity last?**

We do not yet know how long immunity lasts after infection or vaccination:

- **Infection** - Scientists are working to learn more about immunity following infection. While some people have been re-infected after recovering from COVID-19, the number of people who have experienced this is very small compared to the total number of people who have been infected. Likewise, although the virus has been changing since it was first recognized, antibodies from people who were sick early during the pandemic are still effective against the slightly modified

version. For these reasons, scientists are hopeful that people will be protected for one or more years.

- **Vaccination** - Clinical trial participants will be monitored to understand how long immunity lasts after vaccination.

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People with immune-compromising conditions may get the COVID-19 vaccine as long as they are not in one of the following categories:

- Severe allergy to a vaccine component (i.e., one that causes anaphylaxis or requires medical intervention)
- History of severe allergy to any vaccine or injectable medication

However, it is recommended that individuals with compromised immune systems discuss their personal risks and benefits with a health care provider to determine whether to receive the vaccine. Data about how well the vaccine works and its safety in immune-compromised individuals are not currently available, so it is possible that these individuals could have a lower immune response to vaccination. On the other hand, persons with these conditions may also be at higher risk of severe disease due to COVID-19. Therefore, the CDC recommended that people who are immune-compromised or taking immunosuppressive medications could receive the vaccine if they wanted as long as they do not have other contraindications.

If someone with an immune-compromising condition decides to get vaccinated, it will be particularly important for them to receive both doses and practice other public health measures until more is known about their protection against COVID-19. Post-licensure monitoring systems, like the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) and the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD), will allow for real-time monitoring of these sub-groups.

If you experience severe side effects, please seek medical attention immediately. If you would like to report your side effects to the federal reporting system, please visit:

<https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

### **Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or currently breastfeeding?**

There are currently no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in lactating women or the effects of mRNA vaccines on the breastfed infant or milk production / excretion. mRNA vaccines are not considered live virus vaccines and are not thought to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant. If a lactating woman is part of a group (e.g., health care personnel) who is recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, she may choose to be vaccinated. Also, there is little data on these mRNA vaccines in pregnant women. However, we recommend pregnant or breastfeeding women seek guidance from their health care provider regarding your specific medical situation.

**I have specific medical or health conditions that concern me about this vaccine, or about how this vaccine is administered (in the arm)? Should I still get the vaccine?**

Persons with concerns about the vaccine or how it is administered, given their specific health conditions, should consult with their health care provider, who should have the best understanding of their individual health issues.

**How many people need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before we achieve herd immunity?**

Experts estimate at least 70 – 80% of Americans would need to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely that a virus or bacteria can effectively spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.

**Should I delay getting the vaccine if I have scheduled surgery under general anesthesia?**

We recommend that you consult with your health care provider, surgeon, and/or anesthesiologist for an individual response to this type of question. You also may want to contact the vaccine manufacturer's hotline:

Moderna: 866-663-3762

Pfizer: 877-829-2419

## **What can I do differently after I get vaccinated for COVID-19?**

**Will I still have to wear a mask and social distance after I've received both doses of the vaccine?**

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others.

It is clear the vaccines prevent serious illness, but we don't know yet if they will prevent vaccinated people from picking up the virus and spreading it to others. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before deciding to change recommendations on steps everyone should take to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Other factors, including how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities will also affect this decision.

**Once I have been vaccinated, can I ignore any lockdown restrictions?**

Everyone will still need to practice recommended public health measures for a while because it will take time to slow or stop the spread of the virus. The vaccines have a high efficacy rate around 95%, but they do not have a 100% efficacy. Two other factors are important for understanding why:

- While the vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe disease, they might not prevent asymptomatic infection, meaning vaccine recipients might still be able to be infected, but not have symptoms and therefore, unknowingly spread the virus. The vaccine manufacturers are conducting additional studies to clarify.
- Scientists estimate that to control COVID-19, about 7 or 8 of every 10 people will need to be immune. Given that the U.S. population is more than 330 million people, this means that almost 250 million of them will need to be immune to reach this goal. Between March and November 2020, almost 12 million people in the U.S. were found to be infected, although estimates from antibody studies suggest that the number might be 3-7 times greater. This reflects how important vaccines are in controlling the spread because more than 387,000 people in the United States died as a result of COVID-19 infections between March 2020 and January 15, 2021.

Therefore, important safety measure such as masks, social distancing, and other public health measures, will still be necessary to slow or stop the spread of the virus. And, because we won't know who might still be able to be infected after vaccination or previous illness, everyone will be asked to continue taking these precautions until the virus is fully under control.

#### **If I've been vaccinated, but then exposed to COVID-19, do I still need to quarantine?**

Yes, in almost all circumstances. Being vaccinated does not change any of the other guidance for preventing the spread of COVID-19, including quarantine if you have been exposed to the virus. While the vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe disease (although not 100 percent), they might not prevent asymptomatic infection, meaning vaccine recipients might still be able to be infected, but not have symptoms and therefore, unknowingly spread the virus. The very limited exception to quarantine is only for persons who:

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine);
- Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series; AND
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

This limited exception is most safely determined in consultation with your local health department.

#### **How will residents show they have been vaccinated for COVID-19?**

Vaccinated individuals will receive a vaccination record card or printout that documents which COVID-19 vaccine they received and the date they received it. Vaccination providers will also keep a record of vaccination in the providers' Electronic Health Records (EHR) and/or in the Kentucky Immunization Registry.

#### **How many doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?**

The mRNA vaccines require two doses. For the Pfizer vaccine, doses should be separated by 3 weeks. For Moderna's vaccine, doses should be separated by 28 days. The two mRNA vaccines are not interchangeable per the United States Food and Drug Administration. A person should be sure they know which one they received for the first dose and be clear about when they should return for the second dose, particularly because the vaccines require both doses to have maximum protection.

### **What if I miss my second dose?**

It is important that you receive your second dose. The COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses are not completely effective unless you receive the second dose. You should ask to schedule your second dose at the time you receive your initial dose. If you miss your second dose, reach out to the provider for recommendation of next steps.

### **What if I get COVID-19 between my first and second dose of the vaccine?**

If you came down with COVID-19 after getting the first dose of your vaccine but before receiving your second dose, or booster shot, you should wait to get the second dose until after your symptoms have subsided and you have completed the 10-day required isolation period since the symptoms began.

NOTE: For those persons who previously received passive antibody therapy (e.g., Regeneron, Eli Lilly antibody therapy, monoclonal antibodies) for COVID-19: Vaccination should be deferred for at least 90 days afterward.

### **How many people need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before we achieve herd immunity?**

Experts estimate at least 70 – 80% of Americans would need to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely that a virus or bacteria can effectively spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.

## **When/where may I get vaccinated?**

### **What is Kentucky's plan for distributing the COVID-19 vaccine?**

National and state COVID-19 vaccine deployment is rapidly evolving and expanding. As is the case in all other states, Kentucky is distributing the COVID-19 vaccine in phases with a focus on reaching the most vulnerable members of society as quickly as possible. Also, to reach the most people possible as quickly as possible, Kentucky has instructed all vaccine administration sites to administer at least 90% of all vaccines they receive within seven days of arrival at their facility. Kentucky is committed to making the vaccine available to all willing Kentuckians as quickly and efficiently as vaccine quantities allow. The [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://www.ky.gov/covid19) website provides the most up-to-date information related to vaccines, Kentucky's distribution plan, and the vaccine phases.

### **Given the opening of regional vaccine distribution sites, what is the plan for getting vaccines to rural counties and individuals who are either homebound or cannot travel to regional sites?**

Regional vaccine distribution sites represent one part of Kentucky's strategy for ensuring that everyone who is currently eligible for a vaccine is able to get one as quickly as possible. We are building a large network of these high-capacity sites that will grow as the supply of vaccine grows to allow for efficient vaccinations in walk-in, and in the future, drive-through sites. But our strategy also includes continuing

to work with local health departments and other community sites that support public health efforts in every county.

Both the Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines require careful handling and should not be transported once the vials are pierced. Each vial contains multiple vaccine doses, so that instability makes single doses in individual households problematic. We are working on ways to resolve this issue, including incorporating use of a more stable vaccine in the near future.

**I heard that [name of a specific provider or company] is providing vaccines in Kentucky. Will you give me the number I should call or the website I should check to schedule an appointment?**

A comprehensive list of sites that are administering the Covid-19 vaccine to the general public can be found at <https://vaccinemap.ky.gov>.

### **When can I get vaccinated?**

The supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is still limited at this time. As recommended by the CDC, initial efforts have been made to provide early doses of COVID-19 vaccine to health care personnel, long-term care facility residents, and persons ages 70 and older. The CDC based it on recommendations on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), an independent panel of medical and public health experts. The goal is for everyone to be able to easily get a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as large quantities of vaccine are available.

We also have instructed providers to use at least 90% of doses within a week of receipt. We are following a phased distribution system of eligible groups.

Given currently limited vaccine supplies and manufacturers, we anticipate working through the summer to vaccinate those persons in the first three phases, which are:

- Phase 1a: Residents of long-term care and assisted living facilities, as well as health care personnel.
- Phase 1b: Anyone 70 or older, first responders, and K-12 personnel.
- Phase 1c: Anyone 60 or older, anyone 16 or older who has a condition listed by the CDC as highest risk for Covid-19, and all essential workers.
- Phase 2: Anyone age 40 or older.
- Phase 3: Anyone age 16 or older.
- Phase 4: Children under the age of 16 if the vaccine is approved for this age group (est. 18% of KY population)

For more detail about who falls into these categories, please visit [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov).

**When will the general population have access to the COVID-19 vaccine? How many Kentucky residents are in each phase?**

It is very difficult to answer this question accurately. People frequently do not fit into nicely described 'boxes.' In general terms, though, we anticipate the following timelines:

Phase 1a: December 2020 – Winter 2021

Phase 1b: January 2021 – Spring 2021  
Phase 1c: February 2021 – Summer 2021  
Phase 2: Late Summer 2021 – Winter 2021  
Phase 3: Fall 2021 – Winter 2021  
Phase 4: Currently not eligible for vaccination per FDA

### **I'm over 70. Who do I contact to get my COVID-19 vaccine?**

Persons ages 70 and older are currently prioritized for the vaccine in Kentucky. We recently announced the Find-A-Vaccine website ([vaccine.ky.gov](http://vaccine.ky.gov)) and hotline (855) 598-2246; for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, the TTY is 855-326-4654. The Find-A-Vaccine website takes visitors through a survey to determine if they are in a Phase that currently is eligible for the vaccine. If so, they will be able to view a map of locations and a drop-down menu of contact information for sites currently administering vaccines. If not, they will be able to sign up for notifications, via email or text, regarding a change in their eligibility status and other vaccine updates. The Find-A-Vaccine website operators talk through the website, over the phone, with callers.

Vaccine location by phase will also be shared by local health departments and by vaccine providers. We appreciate everyone's patience as we work diligently to ensure all Kentuckians who want to receive a vaccine get one as quickly as possible.

### **I am essential worker. What kind of proof will I need to provide to schedule and obtain my vaccine during Phase 1c?**

To avoid any problems that could arise in obtaining your vaccine, we suggest that you may want to bring with you to your vaccination appointment a work identification badge, recent paycheck stub, or perhaps a letter from your employer.

### **If I signed up for notifications on [vaccine.ky.gov](http://vaccine.ky.gov) or by calling the Find-A-Vaccine hotline at 855-598-2246, do I still need to schedule an appointment, or will I be contacted when it's my turn?**

The Find-A-Vaccine notification system is intended to alert you when your Covid-19 vaccine phase is eligible to schedule a vaccination appointment but does not schedule the appointments for you. The system also may alert you when more appointments open up at sites near you or provide other useful information. For scheduling opportunities and locations visit <https://vaccinemap.ky.gov>. Or you may call our Find-A-Vaccine hotline at 855-598-2246 (TTY for those who are deaf or hard of hearing only - 855-326-4654) for assistance in identifying locations near you and how to reach them.

### **If it is not my turn to get the COVID-19 vaccine, will I be turned away at vaccination sites?**

All Kentuckians are asked to check the vaccine administration phase currently targeted as shown on [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov) and to exercise their kindness and care for others by following the phases so those most at risk for severe COVID-19 have access to the vaccine as quickly as possible.

Vaccine administration sites are doing their best to follow the phasing schedule. At times, persons from later phases may be vaccinated earlier than anticipated as sites strive to administer at least 90% of the vaccine they receive within seven days of receiving it.

But, yes, if a person has clearly violated the current vaccination phase and it is not yet their time, they may be turned away from scheduling themselves for vaccination or receiving a vaccination on site until the phase for which they are eligible is reached.

### **Can my children get vaccinated at the same time that I do?**

No, not if your children are under the age of 16. The COVID-19 vaccines are not currently authorized by the United States Food and Drug Administration to be used in any person under the age of 16. Additionally, healthy children, adolescents, and young adults are at the lowest risk of severe COVID-19 disease and are therefore placed in later phases of vaccine deployment. Healthy persons under the age of 40 are not likely to have access to COVID-19 vaccination until at least the summer of 2021. Learn more about Kentucky's vaccine phases [here](#).

#### Supplemental Responses:

**Pfizer:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to permit the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 16 years of age and older.

**Moderna:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to permit the emergency use of the MODERNA COVID-19 Vaccine for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 18 years of age and older.

### **Will I be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?**

If possible, people should separate their COVID-19 vaccinations by at least 14 days from any other vaccine (before or after). This recommendation is based on the fact that we currently do not have data regarding whether the COVID-19 vaccines will affect, or be affected by, other vaccines.

Studies to determine whether COVID-19 vaccines can be given with the flu vaccine or the shingles vaccine will be completed; these types of studies are called "concomitant use studies."

### **How many doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?**

The mRNA vaccines require two doses. For the Pfizer vaccine, doses should be separated by 3 weeks. For Moderna's vaccine, doses should be separated by 28 days. The two mRNA vaccines are not interchangeable per the United States Food and Drug Administration. A person should be sure they know which one they received for the first dose and be clear about when they should return for the second dose, particularly because the vaccines require both doses to have maximum protection.

### **What if I miss my second dose?**

It is important that you receive your second dose. The COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses are not completely effective unless you receive the second dose. You should ask to schedule your second dose at the time you receive your initial dose. If you miss your second dose, reach out to the provider for recommendation of next steps.

According to the CDC, the second dose should be administered as close to the recommended interval as possible. However, if it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval, the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines may be scheduled for administration up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose.

### **Will the COVID-19 vaccine be an annual shot?**

We don't know yet. Scientists are still studying this and will determine this once the vaccine is distributed and more data becomes available.

### **How many people need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before we achieve herd immunity?**

Experts estimate at least 70 – 80% of Americans would need to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely that a virus or bacteria can effectively spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.

### **I disagree with the system you are using to get people vaccinated. I have some good suggestions about how to improve it.**

Thank you so much for your interest in helping Kentuckians get vaccinated quickly. We have received a tremendous number of suggestions. We are relying on the best advice of experts and have recently dedicated a new task force to help us as we ramp up our vaccine sites. They have access to the best practices from around the country and are adapting those practices to fit the needs of Kentucky.

For general inquires about COVID-19 or the vaccination plan, visit [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov) or email [KYcovid19@ky.gov](mailto:KYcovid19@ky.gov).

### **Why is the COVID-19 vaccine supply not being used quickly? It seems we have much more vaccine than is being used.**

In order to ensure efficient use of the vaccine, we require that at least 90% of the vaccine must be administered within seven days of receipt. Providers also are required to report the vaccines they administer within 24 hours. We then update the online reports as quickly as possible.

### **What is the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program?**

The Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination is a collaboration between the federal government, states, and territories, and 21 national pharmacy partners (Walgreen's for Kentucky), as well as independent pharmacy networks (Good Neighbor in Kentucky) to increase access to COVID-19 vaccine across the country.

In the early stages of the program, a limited number of these retail pharmacies are receiving COVID-19 vaccine supply directly from the federal government to vaccinate priority groups.

## How can I register to be vaccinated when it's my turn?

### How will residents be notified when it is their turn to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

We understand many Kentuckians are eager to get vaccinated as quickly as possible. We recently announced the Find-A-Vaccine website ([vaccine.ky.gov](https://vaccine.ky.gov)) and hotline (855-598-2246; for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, the TTY is 855-326-4654). The Find-A-Vaccine website takes visitors through a survey to determine if they are in a Phase that currently is eligible for the vaccine. If so, they will be able to view a map of locations and a drop-down menu of contact information for sites currently administering vaccines. If not, they will be able to sign up for notifications, via email or text, regarding a change in their eligibility status and other vaccine updates.

### I'm over 70. Who do I contact to get my COVID-19 vaccine?

Individuals age 70 and older are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. For scheduling locations and opportunities, please visit <https://vaccinemap.ky.gov> or call the hotline at 855-598-2246; for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, the TTY is 855-326-4654.

We appreciate everyone's patience as we work diligently to ensure all Kentuckians who want to receive a vaccine get one as quickly as possible.

### Do residents need to make an appointment?

Appointments are recommended to assure people have the time needed to ask questions and be monitored for safety during the 15 minutes required after vaccination is provided

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### Why can't I get a vaccine appointment from the health department in another county?

Local Health Departments may decide to limit vaccinations to persons who reside in their county or health district. Please call ahead to confirm. Regional vaccination sites accept persons from every Kentucky county for vaccination, as long as they are current in an eligible Phase.

### I'm a health care personnel / dental worker. Who do I contact to get my vaccine?

In Kentucky, all health care personnel working in clinical settings (i.e., places where human patient care occurs), regardless of occupational role, are eligible for phase 1a immunization. At [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov), under the health care/lab tab, you can find a map showing the sites identified for this service.

As more vaccine becomes available and this process quickly evolves, more locations will become available. Additionally, in many communities, local health departments and hospitals are doing targeted outreach

to health care personnel to assist in vaccinating them. Please check your local health department or hospital's website to see if this is an option for you.

### **Can employers sign up to have their employees vaccinated?**

Individuals, rather than employers, make appointments to be vaccinated. Each individual will become eligible when their phase arises and will then be able to seek vaccination at vaccine administration sites that will increase in number and distribution as more vaccine becomes available. Team Kentucky will share information as this network expands via [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov), during Governor Andy Beshear's press conferences, and by [press release](#). We understand many Kentuckians are eager to get vaccinated as quickly as possible and we are working to quickly build an information and delivery network to make it possible for Kentuckians to communicate their interest, sign up, and have confidence that they will have access as soon as vaccine quantities make it possible.

### **Can my children get vaccinated at the same time that I do?**

No, not if your children are under the age of 16. The COVID-19 vaccines are not currently authorized by the United States Food and Drug Administration to be used in any person under the age of 16. Additionally, healthy children, adolescents, and young adults are at the lowest risk of severe COVID-19 disease and are therefore placed in later phases of vaccine deployment. Healthy persons under the age of 40 are not likely to have access to COVID-19 vaccination until at least the summer of 2021. Learn more about Kentucky's vaccine phases [here](#).

#### Supplemental Responses:

**Pfizer:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to permit the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 16 years of age and older.

**Moderna:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to permit the emergency use of the MODERNA COVID-19 Vaccine for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 18 years of age and older.

### **How will residents show they have been vaccinated for COVID-19?**

Vaccinated individuals will receive a vaccination record card or printout that documents which COVID-19 vaccine they received and the date they received it. Vaccination providers will also keep a record of vaccination in the providers' Electronic Health Records (EHR) and/or in the Kentucky Immunization Registry.

### **Can out-of-state persons get their vaccinations in Kentucky?**

Each state receives a vaccine allocation based on its population. The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services has directed that every vaccine provider in Kentucky shall ensure each vaccine recipient is either:

3. A resident of the Commonwealth of Kentucky able to demonstrate residency consistent with the requirements of KRS 186.010(12), or

4. An individual providing health care services involving direct care to patients in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

## Why am I not included in an earlier phase?

### Why does another group or person have priority over me?

The supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is still limited at this time. Taking into account guidance from the CDC, we are following a phased distribution system of eligible groups and are working diligently to ensure equitable access to vaccine for all Kentuckians.

We ask for and appreciate your patience. Every Kentuckian will eventually have access to the vaccine.

### **A friend/family member is very vulnerable to COVID-19 and should be eligible for the vaccine, but their condition is not on the CDC list of high-risk conditions for COVID-19. How can I get an exception? OR**

### **I care for a friend/family member who is very vulnerable to COVID-19, so I should receive the vaccine in order to protect that family member, whose condition is not on the CDC list of high-risk conditions for COVID-19. How can I get an exception?**

We appreciate your desire to protect your friend/family member. The supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is still limited at this time. Taking into account guidance from the CDC, we are following a phased distribution system of eligible groups and are working diligently to ensure equitable access to vaccine for all Kentuckians.

Even after receiving both doses of the vaccine, persons will need to continue wearing a mask, washing their hands frequently, keeping at least six feet of distance from persons not in their household, and staying home as much as possible for at least several more months. While the vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe disease (although not 100 percent), they might not prevent asymptomatic infection, meaning vaccine recipients might still be able to be infected, but not have symptoms and therefore, unknowingly spread the virus.

### **I am a home health care worker. Why are we not addressed in Phase 1 along with the other health care workers?**

Home-based health care workers are in phase 1a. In Kentucky, all health care personnel working in clinical settings (i.e., places where patient care occurs), regardless of occupational role, are eligible for phase 1a immunization. At [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://www.ky.gov/covid19), under the health care/lab tab, you can find a map showing the sites identified for this service. As more vaccine becomes available and this process quickly evolves, more locations will become available. Additionally, in many communities, local health departments and hospitals are doing targeted outreach to health care personnel to assist in vaccinating them. Please check your local health department or hospital website to see if this is an option for you.

### **I am a child care provider. Why am I not included in Phase 1b, along with teachers? They are not in school, but I am with the children in my care every day.**

On February 15, Gov. Beshear announced that child care workers had been moved from Phase 1c to Phase 1b. They are now eligible to schedule a vaccination appointment at any site currently offering vaccines in Kentucky.

**I disagree with the system you are using to get people vaccinated. I have some good suggestions about how to improve it.**

Thank you so much for your interest in helping Kentuckians get vaccinated quickly. We have received a tremendous number of suggestions. We are relying on the best advice of experts and have recently dedicated a new task force to help us ramp up our vaccine sites. They have access to the best practices from around the country and are adapting those practices to fit the needs of Kentucky.

For general inquires about COVID-19 or the vaccination plan, visit [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov) or email [KYcovid19@ky.gov](mailto:KYcovid19@ky.gov).

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In order to ensure efficient use of the vaccine, we require that at least 90% of the vaccine must be administered within seven days of receipt. Providers also are required to report the vaccines they administer within 24 hours. We then update the online reports as quickly as possible.

**If it is not my turn to get the COVID-19 vaccine, will I be turned away at vaccination sites?**

All Kentuckians are asked to check the current vaccine administration phase currently targeted as shown on [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov) and to exercise their kindness and care for others by following the phases so those most at risk for severe COVID-19 have access to the vaccine as quickly as possible.

Vaccine administration sites are doing their best to follow the phasing schedule. At times, persons from later phases may be vaccinated earlier than anticipated as sites strive to administer at least 90% of the vaccine they receive within seven days of receiving it.

But, yes, if a person has clearly violated the current vaccination phase and it is not yet their time, they may be turned away from scheduling themselves for vaccination or receiving a vaccination on site until the phase for which they are eligible is reached.

## Can an exception be made for me to get the vaccine earlier?

**My situation deserves an exception to the phased distribution system.**

The supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is still limited at this time. Taking into account guidance from the CDC, we are following a phased distribution system of eligible groups. For more information regarding phases, please visit the [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://www.ky.gov/ky-covid-19) website. We ask for and appreciate your patience. Every Kentuckian will eventually have access to the vaccine.

**Why does another group or person have priority over me?**

The supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is still limited at this time. Taking into account guidance from the CDC, we are following a phased distribution system of eligible groups and are working diligently to ensure equitable access to vaccine for all Kentuckians.

We ask for and appreciate your patience. Every Kentuckian will eventually have access to the vaccine.

**I am a caregiver for my elderly parents. Both parents have underlying health issues. Can I get the vaccine early to help protect my parents?**

The Kentucky Department for Public Health understands everyone's desire to get a vaccine. The vaccine supply remains limited at this time. Taking into account guidance from the CDC, Kentucky's distribution plan was created with careful consideration for the safety and health of all Kentuckians. Each individual should be vaccinated in the phase in which they belong. We appreciate everyone's kindness and caring for each other as well as patience as we work diligently to ensure all Kentuckians who want one will receive a vaccine as quickly as possible.

**I disagree with the system you are using to get people vaccinated. I have some good suggestions about how to improve it.**

Thank you so much for your interest in helping Kentuckians get vaccinated quickly. We have received a tremendous number of suggestions. We are relying on the best advice of experts and have recently dedicated a new task force to help us ramp up our vaccine sites. They have access to the best practices from around the country and are adapting those practices to fit the needs of Kentucky.

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## Are vaccines going to be required?

### **Are we going to be required to take the COVID-19 vaccine?**

There is no state or federal government requirement for any person to take the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Will children be allowed to attend school if those in the household have not received the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The Kentucky Department for Public Health, in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, will collaborate to determine and communicate school-related recommendations for vaccines. There is no federal or state requirement to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and this is unlikely to change. There is also no recommendation or guidance that would prevent children from attending school if others in their household are not vaccinated.

### **What if teachers or administrators at my child's school have refused the vaccine? How will my child be protected?**

Healthy children, adolescents, and young adults are at the lowest risk of severe COVID-19 disease. In general, the CDC recommends that children ages two and older should wear a mask. Masks offer some protection to the wearer and those around him or her. However, the CDC recognizes that wearing masks may not be possible in every situation or for some people. Appropriate and consistent use of masks may be challenging for some children, such as children with certain disabilities, including cognitive, intellectual, developmental, sensory, and behavioral disorders. Visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) to learn more.

### **Can residents travel by plane if they haven't received the COVID-19 vaccine once it is publicly available?**

There are no current requirements to be vaccinated to engage in air travel or any other specified activity.

As of February 1, 2021, the CDC requires masks to be worn when flying or traveling on public transportation, as well as in airports and bus stations or other public transportation hubs. If you are planning on traveling in the near future, you should refer to the airline or other relevant entity's policies to ensure that you understand current guidance and requirements.

**How will residents show they have been vaccinated for COVID-19?**

Vaccinated individuals will receive a vaccination record card or printout that documents which COVID-19 vaccine they received and the date they received it. Vaccination providers will also keep a record of vaccination in the providers' Electronic Health Records (EHR) and/or in the Kentucky Immunization Registry.

**How many people need to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before we achieve herd immunity?**

Experts estimate at least 70 – 80% of Americans would need to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely that a virus or bacteria can effectively spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.