

# Our Community. Our Health.

Independence 

 The Philadelphia Tribune

Our community has its own challenges when it comes to heart disease, diabetes, and maternal health. Each have been shown to increase the severity of a COVID-19 infection. There's never been a better time than now to protect ourselves against the pandemic by choosing to get vaccinated. The facts remain; vaccines are safe, effective, and necessary to guard against COVID-19. This is Our Community. Our Health.

## Here's what we know:

- In Philadelphia, African Americans are 2.5 times more likely to be hospitalized for COVID-19.
- From 2019 to 2021, life expectancy for African Americans dropped by 4 years due to the pandemic.
- As of January 2023, African Americans make up 47% of all COVID-19 deaths in Philadelphia.
- Black women are already 3 times more likely to die during or after a pregnancy. Mortality rates have only increased due to the effects of COVID-19.

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## Safety

- The ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccines are well understood by the scientific community to be safe. They do not contain live virus and cannot cause COVID-19.
- There is no scientific evidence that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility, and the vaccines have been determined to be safe in pregnancy.
- All COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the FDA for use in the United States have gone through the same rigorous safety assessment as all other vaccines before.
- Clinical trials included diverse groups of people of varying sex, age, race, and underlying medical conditions.
- The COVID-19 vaccine may have side effects, such as headache, sore muscles, fatigue, or a mild fever. These symptoms usually last for a day or two.

## Efficacy

- The vaccine is our most powerful tool to slow the spread of COVID-19, prevent serious illness and hospitalizations, and reduce the likelihood of new variants emerging.
- Vaccines are particularly important for adults over 65 because the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age.

## Protect yourself and others

- COVID-19 can cause severe illness and may cause long-term issues well after infection.
- It is important to get vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19. Vaccination will reduce the risk of reinfection and protect you and others.
- While the vaccine can prevent people from getting sick, you should continue to wear a mask, practice social distancing, and wash your hands.

## Childhood vaccinations and boosters

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends children get vaccinated for COVID-19, as they do not have natural immunity against the virus. Children can become sick and transmit it to others.
- The CDC recommends anyone ages 5 and up receive a COVID-19 booster if they have received their last dose at least 2 months ago. The booster has increased protection against more relevant variants.
- Children ages 6 months to 4 years, who received Moderna shots as their primary series, are also eligible to receive a booster two months after their last shot. As of January 2023, there is no booster recommendation for children ages 6 months to 4 years who got the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine primary series.