

## **What You Need to Know - CDC Guidelines for People Who are Fully Vaccinated**

### **When am I fully vaccinated?**

The CDC's new recommendations only apply to people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. You are fully vaccinated 2 weeks after getting all the recommended doses of the specific vaccine you received. This is because it takes your body about 2 weeks to develop immunity.

Right now, there are three FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines require two doses while the Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one. A single shot of the two-dose vaccines does not give you full protection, so you need to get both injections to be completely vaccinated.

Until you are fully vaccinated (waiting 14 days after your last injection), you should continue to follow the recommendations to prevent COVID-19 infection. This means wearing a mask, washing your hands, and social distancing. Under certain conditions you should continue these practices for the safety of yourself and others.

### **Can I visit my family and friends after I'm fully vaccinated?**

Yes. Once you are fully vaccinated, you may interact with people with fewer restrictions.

However, there are still some precautions to take. For example, you want to keep your group sizes small. And you should still be cautious around people at high risk for COVID-19. People at high risk have a greater chance of getting severely ill if they become infected. Health conditions like cancer and diabetes put some people at higher risk. Older adults and pregnant women are also at increased risk.

Here are a few things to know about seeing other people, according to the CDC.

### **I want to see people who are also fully vaccinated**

If everyone in the group is vaccinated, it is OK to spend time with friends and family indoors without wearing masks or social distancing. But the CDC says you should keep the group size small for now. This means you can have a small group of friends (all fully vaccinated) over to your house for dinner.

(The Healthy at Church Advisory Team is continuing to consider how groups may meet. However, it is unlikely that each person who wishes to meet in-person in a group is fully vaccinated at the present time. Anyone who participates in group meetings should maintain the wearing of masks and maintain social distancing. Personal group planning is different than recommendations the Advisory Team considers for planning for church groups to meet.)

### **I want to see people who aren't vaccinated**

If you have friends and family who aren't fully vaccinated yet, you can see them indoors without wearing masks or social distancing **as long as they are at low risk for COVID-19**. People at low risk are generally younger and healthy as long as they are at low risk for COVID-19.

The CDC says all these people should live together or come from the same household. This is because there is a greater risk of COVID-19 spreading when different households come together. If you see people at the same time from more than one household, everyone should wear a mask, social distance, and meet outside or where there is good ventilation.

If you are around someone who is high risk for COVID-19 and unvaccinated, you should still wear a mask and social distance. It is also better to spend time with them in a well-ventilated area or outside.

### **How many people can I see at a time?**

The CDC advises against medium and large groups getting together even if everyone is vaccinated. It is also better not to bring people together from different households without wearing masks and social distancing if not everyone is fully vaccinated.

### **Can I still get COVID-19 or spread it to others if I'm vaccinated?**

Yes. Once you are fully vaccinated, your risk of infection is lower, but you can still get COVID-19 and spread it to others. This is why it is important to be cautious around people who are at high risk for COVID-19 and are unvaccinated.

### **What do I do if I've been exposed to someone with COVID-19?**

If you are exposed to someone with known or suspected COVID-19 after you are fully vaccinated, you should watch closely to see if you develop any symptoms over the next 14 days. Since you are vaccinated, you don't need to quarantine while watching for symptoms.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time, talk to your healthcare provider and consider getting tested. You should also follow the CDC's guidelines for isolation. This means separating yourself from others until your symptoms improve.

### **Do I need to wear a mask in public even if I am fully vaccinated?**

Yes. Right now, the CDC says to continue to wear a mask, social distance, and wash your hands regularly when out in public. It is best to avoid large crowds and indoor spaces with poor ventilation. This is because not everyone is vaccinated, and following these recommendations helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## **Can I travel?**

Right now, the CDC says even vaccinated people should still stay home and avoid traveling if possible. If you need to travel, be sure to check for travel restrictions first.

- Fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and spread COVID-19.
- People who are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine can travel safely within the United States:
  - Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to get tested before or after travel unless their destination requires it
  - Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to self-quarantine
- Fully vaccinated travelers should still follow CDC's recommendations for traveling safely including:
  - Wear a mask over your nose and mouth
  - Stay 6 feet from others and avoid crowds
  - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer

## **If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That's because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again.

If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

Experts are still learning more about how long vaccines protect against COVID-19 in real-world conditions. CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

## **Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?**

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications.

**The bottom line**

Once you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, your chances of getting sick are lower. But you can still spread the virus to others. The good news is the CDC continues to provide new information on how vaccinated people can safely interact with the public as well as their family and friends. This information will likely change in the future as more people get vaccinated, so continue to check for updates. The Healthy at Church Advisory Team will be providing ongoing information and education as updates become available.

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