

## Vaccines to Prevent COVID-19

As you know Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is a dangerous disease that has spread to every country in the world. Here in Rhode Island, over 85,000 people have become sick with COVID-19, and almost 1,800 people have died from COVID-19.

Vaccines have been developed to prevent people from getting COVID-19, and they are starting to distribute the vaccines.

A vaccine is a product that helps a person's body produce immunity to a disease, that is, once a person receives a vaccine, he or she can be exposed to the disease without becoming infected.

Vaccination is important because it not only protects the person who gets the vaccine, but also helps to keep diseases from spreading to others, like family members, neighbors, classmates, and other members of your communities.

The new COVID-19 vaccines have been rigorously tested for safety before being authorized for use in the United States. The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain a live virus and do not carry a risk of causing disease in the vaccinated person.

The COVID-19 vaccines being used in the United States require two shots. The first shot starts building protection, but everyone must come back a few weeks later for the second one to get the most protection the vaccine can offer.

Most people do not have serious problems after being vaccinated. Some side effects people have experienced are your arm may be sore, red, or warm to the touch. These symptoms usually go away on their own within a week. Some people report getting a headache or fever when getting a vaccine. These side effects are a sign that your immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do. It is working and building up protection to disease.

Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to everyone at no cost. However, vaccination providers will be able to charge an administration fee for giving the shot to someone. Vaccine providers can get this fee reimbursed by the patient's public or private insurance company or, for uninsured patients, by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

Each state has its own plan for who will be vaccinated first and how the vaccines will be distributed. Health care workers and older people will be given the vaccines first. Beyond this initial distribution the State of Rhode Island will be issuing further guidelines in the days to come. Find more information at [www.C19vaccineRI.org](http://www.C19vaccineRI.org).