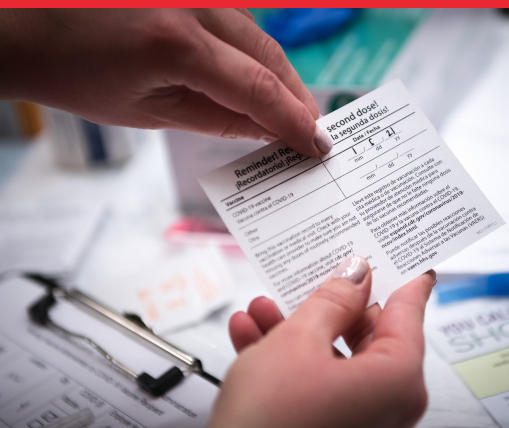


COVID-19 VACCINE

Workforce Information Guide





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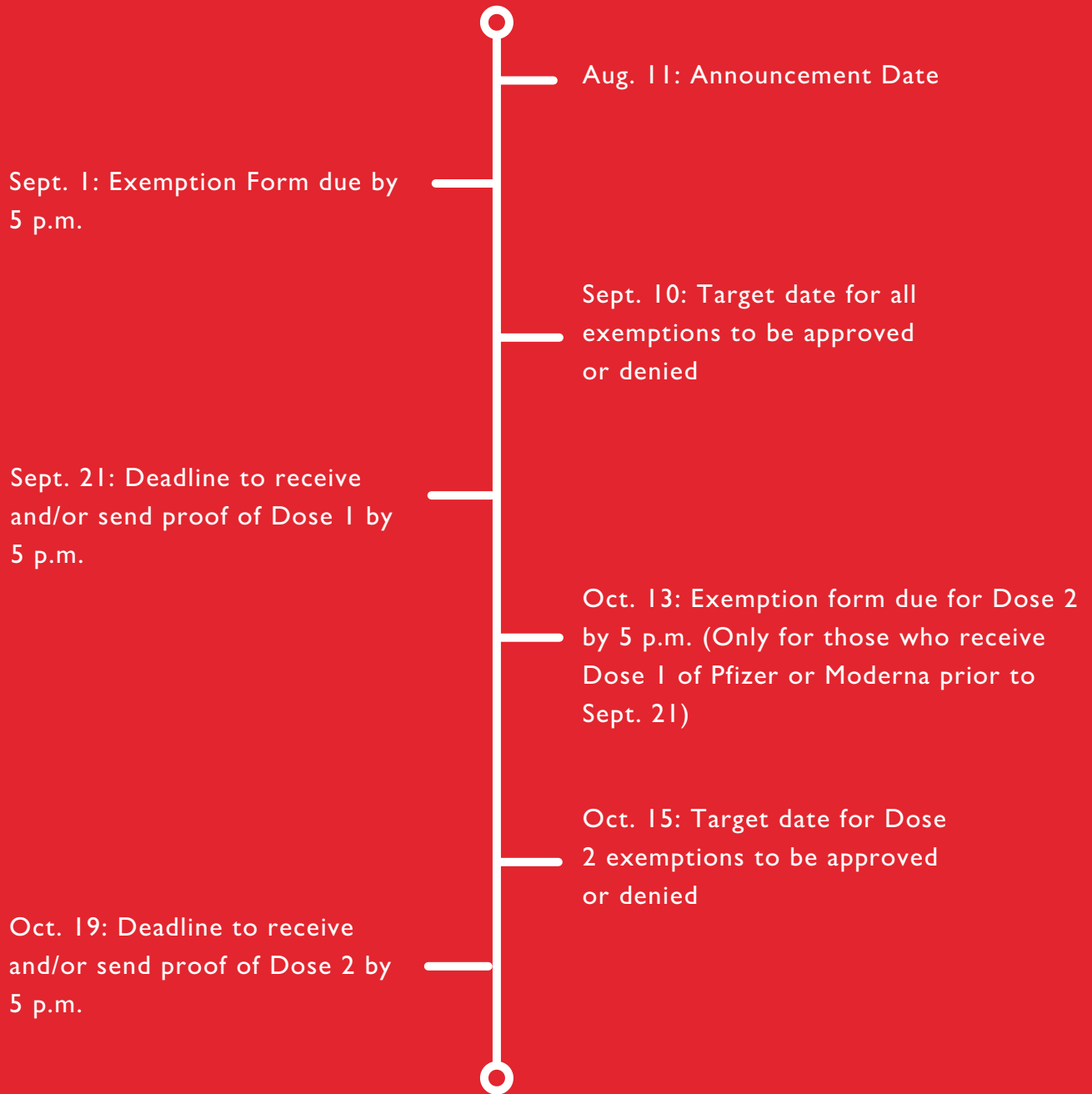
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WORKFORCE VACCINATION POLICY TIMELINE



COVID-19 AND VACCINE

Q & A

Texas Children's Requirement Policy

Q: What is taking place?

In response to the emergence of new variants, increasing cases, hospitalizations and deaths related to COVID-19, and the availability of safe and effective vaccines across our communities, Texas Children's is requiring all team members to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This includes receiving at least one dose of a Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine by 5 p.m. on Sept. 21, 2021, and a second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine by 5 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2021. This applies to all Texas Children's workforce members, including employees, students, interns, medical staff, contractors and volunteers.

Q: Why is Texas Children's requiring a COVID-19 vaccine among its team members?

As a leader in health care, Texas Children's cares deeply for preserving life and will always do everything we can to prevent avoidable sickness and death from occurring. This includes requiring the vaccine among our team members. In arriving at this decision, we determined the following:

- At Texas Children's, we have a responsibility to protect our patients and children, many of whom are either vulnerable as immunocompromised patients or are not yet eligible for the vaccine, which is only available to those 12 or older.
- The COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective for all eligible persons.
- New variants are putting unvaccinated and vulnerable populations at greater risk of severe illness or death, as they are more easily transmitted from one person to another.
- Today, approximately 99.5% of COVID-19 deaths are among unvaccinated individuals.

Q: Are there any exemptions allowed?

Texas Children's recognizes certain religions or medical conditions may preclude a person from receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. In such instances, an employee may be eligible for an exemption. To apply for a religious or medical exemption, please read the *Medical or Religious Exemptions* section of this document (page 9).

Q: Why is Texas Children’s requiring a vaccine that has not been approved by the FDA?

As of April 23, 2021, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine, known as the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, will now be marketed as Comirnaty, for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older. The vaccine also continues to be available under emergency use authorization (EUA), including for individuals 12 through 15 years of age and for the administration of a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals. Comirnaty contains messenger RNA (mRNA), a kind of genetic material. The mRNA is used by the body to make a mimic of one of the proteins in the virus that causes COVID-19. The result of a person receiving this vaccine is that their immune system will ultimately react defensively to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Q: I will be telecommuting. Am I required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19?

Yes. All Texas Children’s workforce members whether working on-site or remotely are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. With the number of cases from more contagious variants on the rise in our communities, it’s time for Texas Children’s team members to all be part of the solution that can stop this deadly virus in its tracks. Patients, families, colleagues and our communities are relying on us to do the right thing.

Q: I have already contracted COVID-19. Am I required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19?

Individuals who have contracted COVID-19 still benefit from getting vaccinated. Due to the severe health outcomes associated with this virus, and the fact that re-infection is possible due to emerging variants, all workforce members are required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine regardless of if they contracted the virus previously.

Q: My doctor says I should not receive the vaccine. Am I still required to get the vaccine?

An employee may be exempt from the vaccine due to a medical condition or for religious reasons. To learn how to submit an exemption, please read the *Medical or Religious Exemptions* section of this document (page 9).

Q: I received one dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine and had a reaction and my doctor says I should not receive a second dose. Am I required to receive a second dose?

An employee may request an exemption from receiving the second dose of the vaccine by submitting an [Exemption Request form](#). To learn more, please read the *Medical or Religious Exemptions* section of this document (page 9).

Q: I don’t believe the vaccines are safe. Am I still required to get the vaccine?

According to the CDC, FDA and numerous other healthcare organizations and medical professionals, the vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death. Being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is required for working at Texas Children’s, unless you have an approved medical or religious exemption.

Q: I want to receive the vaccine but just not at this time. Can I get it later?

All workforce members of Texas Children's are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by the following timeframe: at least one dose of a Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine by 5 p.m. on Sept. 21, 2021, and a second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine by 5 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2021. If you are not able to receive both doses within this timeline due to a medical condition, please read the *Medical or Religious Exemptions* section of this document (page 9).

Q: Rather than receive the vaccine, is there an option to be tested on a regular basis?

No, the requirement is to be fully vaccinated or receive an approved exemption.

Q: What if I am on a leave of absence and will not return to work until after Sept. 21?

Workforce members currently on a leave of absence are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine before returning to work. If you are not vaccinated prior to returning to work, you will be required to be fully vaccinated within 30 days of your return date.

Q: Do I have the option to remain unvaccinated?

Except for those with an approved medical or religious exemption, being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is required for continued employment at Texas Children's. The deadline to receive a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is 5 p.m. Sept. 21, 2021. If an employee is not vaccinated by this time, their employment will end at the conclusion of their shift.

Q: Will Texas Children's compensate me for the time I spend to receive the vaccine?

Texas Children's non-exempt employees may be compensated to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

- If being vaccinated at Texas Children's outside of your regular work schedule, you will need to inform Employee Health of your appointment. From there, Employee Health will notify your leader to initiate administrative leave, which may include travel time and post-vaccination observation.
- If you are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine elsewhere, please report the vaccination to Employee Health or call 832-826-4600, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- You will also be required to provide proof of vaccination, such as a photo of your COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (PNG, PDF or JPG), after receiving each dose. Administrative time may be approved based upon information provided.

Q: I have already received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Do I need to be vaccinated again with Moderna or Pfizer?

No, if you received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you have met the requirement.

Q: If I received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine before Sept. 21, did I meet the full requirement?

Yes, if you received one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine by Sept. 21, you met our full vaccination requirement.

Q: If I received the first dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine and had an adverse reaction, will I be required to take a second dose?

If you had an adverse reaction to the vaccine, please contact Employee Health to notify them of the side effects. Following your first dose, you will be required to either receive an approved exemption from receiving the second dose or receive the second dose to be in compliance. For more information, please review the Medical or Religious Exemptions section of this document (page 11).

The Vaccines

Q: Which COVID-19 vaccines are currently being administered to workforce members?

Texas Children's currently administers the Pfizer vaccine, along with limited doses of the Moderna vaccine. The brand of vaccine is listed when scheduling an appointment.

Q: How were the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines made?

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA to teach the immune system how to generate antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccines were created using a method that has been in development for decades, allowing the process to begin quickly during the early stages of the pandemic. The vaccine developers did not skip any trial or testing steps, but conducted some of the steps on an overlapping schedule to gather data more quickly.

Q: Are the vaccines safe?

Yes. According to the CDC, FDA and numerous other healthcare organizations and medical professionals, the vaccines are safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death.

Q: Are the vaccines effective?

The efficacy of two doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are both between 94-95%. This means, in clinical trials, the vaccines prevented approximately 94-95% of COVID-19 disease in vaccinated individuals and only 5-6% of vaccinated people developed the virus. Additionally, according to the CDC, both vaccines are highly effective in preventing hospitalization and death, including against the recent Delta variant. Today, approximately 99.5% of all COVID-19 deaths are among unvaccinated individuals.

Q: Do the vaccines affect fertility?

According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the COVID-19 vaccines are not thought to cause an increased risk of infertility, miscarriage, stillbirth or birth defects.

Q: Should I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists strongly recommends that all eligible persons, including pregnant and lactating individuals, receive a COVID-19 vaccine or vaccine series. To date, there have been no adverse maternal or fetal effects from vaccinating pregnant individuals with COVID-19 vaccines, and a growing body of data demonstrates the safety of such use. To learn more about family planning and how it relates to the COVID-19 vaccines, please consult your personal physician. Information is also available through the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Receiving a COVID-19 Vaccine

Q: How do I receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

To schedule your vaccine appointment online through Texas Children's, please [click here](#). When scheduling, please register as a patient. In addition to Texas Children's, the [vaccines](#) are offered at multiple locations across our communities.

Once you receive your vaccine, you will be required to submit proof of vaccination to Employee Health, even if you received the vaccine through Texas Children's. Learn how to submit your documentation by reviewing the next question.

Q: I received my vaccine. How do I submit proof?

To submit proof of vaccination, please email a photo of your COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to employeevaccines@texaschildrens.org. The deadline for submitting proof of your first dose is 5 p.m. on Sept. 21, 2021. The deadline for submitting proof of your second dose is 5 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2021.

Make sure the following information is completed on the card:

- Your name and date of birth
- Date(s) you received the vaccine
- Manufacturer and lot number
- Healthcare Professional or Clinical Site where the vaccine was administered
- The documentation must be in a PNG, PDF or JPG file format

Q: I received my vaccine through Texas Children’s. Why do I need to submit proof to Employee Health?

As of July 1, Texas Children’s vaccination administration transitioned to MyChart, our patient portal. To prevent any access to private medical records, Employee Health will not be able to access medical information through MyChart and will require employees to submit proof.

Q: I never received or lost my COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card. What do I do?

Please contact the Texas State Health Department as follows to request a record of your immunization. If you received the vaccine elsewhere, please click here for a listing of health departments in other states. Once you have emailed the Texas State Health Department, please forward a copy of that email request to Employee Health.

Texas State Health Department

Call: 800.252.9152

Web: Texas Immunization Registry

Email: ImmTrac@dshs.state.tx.us (recommended)

If you registered with the CDC’s v-safe program to track post-vaccine side effects and symptoms, you can access your COVID-19 vaccination record in the app. Please take a screenshot of your vaccination information in v-safe and email it to Employee Health.

Q: When and where do I go for my second dose of the vaccine?

Second doses are generally scheduled for the same time and place as your first, 21 days after the date of your first dose for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna.

Q: What if I receive the vaccine and have adverse side effects?

The vast majority of those who receive the COVID-19 vaccine experience only mild side effects. However, should you develop any severe reactions, please contact the Vaccine Employee Support Clinic at 832-VACCINE (832-822-2463), Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Q: Should I receive the vaccine if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are currently considered a close contact of someone with COVID-19, vaccination should be delayed until you meet the criteria for returning to work.

Q: What happens if I am exposed to or contract COVID-19 after the first dose, but before the second dose?

Please contact the Vaccine Employee Support Clinic at 832-VACCINE (832-822-2463), Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Medical or Religious Exemptions

Q: How do I apply for a Medical or Religious exemption?

To apply for a medical or religious exemption, please access our [Exemption Request form](#). On the form, an employee will be required to attest to the risks of not receiving a COVID-19 vaccination and agree to any current or future requirements, including submitting documentation to Texas Children's affirming their exemption. If you are not able to access the form online, you may e-mail your completed form, available in this information kit, to employeerelations@texaschildrens.org.

When requesting a medical exemption, an employee will be required to include a [Medical Exemption Provider Statement](#) with their request, which must be signed by the employee's physician.

The deadline for submitting an exemption form for dose 2 is Oct. 13, 2021 by 5 p.m.

Q: If I have not started with Texas Children's, how do I apply for a Medical or Religious exemption?

To apply for an exemption, please complete the two pre-hire exemption forms [here](#) and then email them to employeerelations@texaschildrens.org. In the email, please indicate that you are in the onboarding process.

The deadline for submitting an exemption form is 21 days after you have received the exemption form as part of the offer and onboarding process.

Q: If I previously submitted a declination form, do I need to resubmit a new Exemption Request form?

Yes. If you previously declined the vaccine, please submit an [Exemption Request form](#). Now that Texas Children's is requiring the vaccine, you must complete the exemption form and provide any required documentation or otherwise receive the COVID-19 vaccine to be in compliance with our policy.

Q: What is the approval process for receiving an exemption?

Once a workforce member submits their [Exemption Request form](#) - along with any required documentation - the information will be reviewed by Human Resources. New hires will receive notice through the email address we have on file.

Q: If my exemption is approved, will I be required to adhere to additional safety measures?

If a workforce member's exemption is approved, they may be required to wear additional PPE, undergo regular COVID-19 testing, conform to other alternative infection control measures, or be subject to reassignment to alternative and available units. Each workforce team member's situation will be assessed on an individual basis.

Q: What happens if my exemption request is denied?

If a workforce member's exemption is denied, they may be required to submit additional documentation. The additional documentation must be received by Oct. 19, 2021. Otherwise, the employee will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, which includes receiving at least one dose of a vaccine by 5 p.m. on Sept. 21, 2021, and a second dose by 5 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2021.

Q: How do I find out my employees' vaccination status?

To learn the vaccination status of your individual team members, please visit our QlikView app by [clicking here](#). If you have problems accessing the QlikView app, please contact HRCommunications@texaschildrens.org. Once an employee submits proof of vaccination, it will take approximately one business day for their status to be updated on our tracking site.



COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTION REQUEST FORM

Employee Name: _____ Employee ID#: _____
Work Location: _____ Title: _____
Phone Number: _____

In seeking an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination, I attest to the following:

- I understand the purpose, need, risk, and benefits for the required vaccine(s).
- I understand that Texas Children's, the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the Texas Department of Health have strongly recommended that the vaccine(s) be given to all persons who have been screened and determined to be candidates for the vaccine(s).
- I understand that my exposure to patients at Texas Children's puts me at risk of acquiring the disease.
- I consent to the release of this request and any supporting documentation to all such representatives of Texas Children's, on a need-to-know basis, in order for the representatives to carry out their duties and to act on my request for an exemption.
- I understand that I may be requested to provide additional documentation substantiating my exemption request, and my exemption request may be subject to individual or committee review.
- I understand that, if I am granted an exemption, I may be subject to reassignment to an alternate and available unit. Also, I may be required to wear additional PPE, undergo regular COVID-19 testing and/or conform to other alternative infection control measures. Texas Children's does not permit discrimination or retaliation against employees who are granted an exemption.
- I understand that my request for an exemption may not be granted if it is not reasonable or if it creates an undue hardship to Texas Children's.
- If my request for exemption is based on a temporary medical condition, I acknowledge that I will receive the COVID-19 vaccine(s) within 30 days of the resolution of my medical condition.
- Even if Texas Children's grants this exemption, I understand that I may be required to furnish additional information or supporting documentation from me, my medical provider(s) or my religion's spiritual leader(s) as circumstances evolve in the future. Likewise, I understand that this exemption, if granted, is subject to change at the discretion of Texas Children's in the future. I may be asked to re-certify my exemption on a regular basis.

In signing the Immunization Exemption Request Form, I acknowledge that I have read this document in its entirety and fully understand it. I understand and agree that any misrepresentation on my behalf may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

Acknowledgement:

I am requesting an exemption for medical reasons (physician documentation required)

I am requesting an exemption based upon sincerely held religious beliefs. If requested, would you be able to provide documentation of your religious beliefs? Yes No, why not _____

Documents to upload: Statement from medical provider.



COVID-19 Vaccine Exemption Provider Statement

Employee Name (printed): _____

Employee Position: _____

Medical Exemption (For Health Care Provider's Completion):

I certify that the individual stated above has a physical condition and/or medical circumstance, and because of the physical condition and/or medical circumstance, the vaccinations currently authorized by the FDA for COVID-19 are not considered safe for administration to this patient at this time. I understand and have counseled my patient that not receiving this vaccination does increase risk for exposure to disease(s).

Medical Professional Name (printed): _____

Title: _____

Location of Practice (Name/Address): _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

MYTH VERSUS FACT

With all of the information online and in the news, it can be tricky to know what to believe when it comes to COVID-19 and the available vaccines. Read below to learn more about the truth behind some of the more common myths about the virus and the available vaccines.

“There hasn’t been enough research to know the long-term side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines.”

FACT:

Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are extremely unlikely following any vaccination, including the COVID-19 vaccinations. Vaccine monitoring has historically shown side effects generally happen within six weeks of receiving a vaccine dose. For this reason, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) required each of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines to be studied for at least two months after the final dose, and such studies are still ongoing. Millions of doses have been given in the United States from Dec. 14, 2020, through today, and no long-term side effects have been reported.

“The vaccines are still experimental and for emergency use only.”

FACT:

The COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated in thousands of participants during clinical trials and met the FDA’s rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality. As a result, the Pfizer vaccine was given full FDA approval on April 23, 2021, for those 16 years or older. The Moderna vaccine is expected to receive full FDA approval as well in the near future. The COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna were created with a method that has been in development for the past decade, allowing the process for vaccine development to begin quickly during the very early stages of the pandemic. This technology was simply ready for prime time in 2020. Vaccine developers did not skip any steps or take any shortcuts. Vaccine developers simply combined phases and worked more efficiently by creatively re-examining processes and working in parallel as much as possible.

“I’m concerned that the COVID-19 vaccines will cause reproductive issues.”

FACT:

There is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems or issues with menstruation or menopause. According to the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, the vaccines do not interfere with an individual’s DNA and have not been associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, fertility, birth defects or stillbirths. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that all eligible persons, including pregnant and lactating individuals, receive a COVID-19 vaccine. To learn more about fertility and how it relates to the COVID-19 vaccines, please consult your personal physician.

“The COVID-19 vaccines have caused too many deaths.”

FACT:

The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death. Reports of deaths after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine are exceedingly rare and have only been associated with a single vaccine type. Risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19 is much greater without a vaccine.

“According to the CDC, more than 6,000 people have died from the vaccines.”

FACT:

The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Reports of death after COVID-19 vaccination are rare, as more than 342 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines were administered in the U.S. from Dec. 14 through July 26, 2021. During this time, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) received 6,340 reports of death (0.0019%) among people who received a COVID-19 vaccine. However, when reviewing this information online, some news outlets site VAERS as a source of information for knowing the true side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines. However, VAERS cannot and does not determine the side effects of a vaccine. It simply collects data that is submitted to the site from various outlets in order to identify safety signals and trends. The CDC, which manages VAERS, states this clearly in their disclaimer: "A report to VAERS does not mean that the vaccine caused the adverse event, only that the adverse event occurred sometime after vaccination." The disclaimer continues, "The reports may contain information that is incomplete, inaccurate, coincidental or unverifiable."

“I’m not at a high risk of dying from COVID-19, so the vaccine just isn’t necessary.”

FACT:

All persons, including healthy and young individuals, are at risk of severe outcomes from contracting COVID-19, which can have symptoms lasting several weeks or even longer. This includes individuals that are asymptomatic with initial infection. Getting the vaccine can prevent you from being hospitalized or developing even more severe symptoms, as well as spreading the virus to vulnerable populations such as those who are under 12 years old and not eligible to receive a vaccine.

“The mortality rate from COVID-19 is very low.”

FACT:

Deaths as a result of COVID-19 are still high and remain an immediate concern with over 694,000 in the U.S. alone and 4.8M worldwide through September 30, 2021. As of August 2021, COVID-19-related deaths were the third leading cause of death in the U.S. As of August 2021, an average of 727 people per day continue to die of COVID-19 in the U.S., making this pandemic very real and the consequences extremely dire.

“The vaccination rate is already high and deaths from COVID-19 are down, so getting vaccinated isn’t necessary.”

FACT:

Getting vaccinated not only helps to prevent infection, but also severe outcomes from being infected such as hospitalization and even death. At this time, the vaccination rate for Texas is actually low compared to other states at only 52.67% of the population being fully vaccinated. In addition, as of Aug. 1, 2021, most U.S. counties are experiencing high levels of community transmission, meaning the virus is continuing to spread across our population.

The current seven-day moving average of new deaths (293) has increased 24% compared with the previous seven-day moving average (223). To bring this pandemic to an end, a large share of the world needs to be immune to the virus (to achieve herd immunity), and the safest way to achieve this is through vaccinations

“I’ve already had COVID-19 and have natural immunity.”

FACT:

People who have contracted COVID-19 still benefit from getting vaccinated, as experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again. Simply put, vaccine-induced immunity is more reliable and robust than natural immunity due to infection. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19, and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible due to emerging variants, people are advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before. Studies have shown that vaccination provides a strong boost in protection in people who have recovered from COVID-19. For more information about the effectiveness of the vaccine against COVID-19, see the CDC’s [“Answering your Questions about the Safety and Effectiveness of the COVID-19 Vaccines”](#) guide.

“The vaccines don’t fully protect a person from contracting COVID-19.”

FACT:

Although the vaccines may not be 100% effective in preventing a person from contracting COVID-19, they are highly effective against COVID-19 in preventing serious outcomes of severe disease, hospitalization and death. Additionally, approximately 99.5% of all COVID-19 deaths are among unvaccinated individuals.

“There is a lot of information about the vaccines online – from microchips to severe adverse effects – and I don’t know what to believe.”

FACT:

Believe and trust the experts! Double check information against reliable sources like the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [Johns Hopkins Medicine](#). For more information from Texas Children’s, please visit our [COVID-19 Vaccine website](#) where you can find fact sheets about the vaccines, including information sessions hosted by our resident experts on the COVID-19 vaccines.



Useful Quick Links:

- [Yale Medicine; Comparing the COVID-19 Vaccines: How Are They Different?](#)
- [CDC: Answering Your Questions About the Safety and Effectiveness of the COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [CDC: How Viral Vector COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- [CDC: How mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- [CDC: Possible Side Effects After Getting A COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

More Resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)
- [Texas Children's COVID-19 Page](#)