

Going to work or school when you have side effects

Side effects can happen after vaccination and can be similar to symptoms of illnesses, like COVID-19. These side effects can include pain, swelling, or redness where the shot was given. Less common side effects can include headache, fatigue, or fever.

- If you are experiencing side effects where the shot was given (such as pain, swelling, or redness), but you are otherwise well, you can return to work or school. Typically, side effects start within a day of receiving the vaccine and may last for three days.
- If you are experiencing other symptoms of illness like fever, headache, or noticeable tiredness, then you should stay home. These may or may not be due to the vaccine. With any of these symptoms, stay home until your symptoms are improved and you have not had a fever for 24 hours. **If symptoms worsen or last longer than three days, stay home and call your health care provider.** Because the virus that causes COVID-19 is still in our communities, it is possible that you were exposed to COVID-19 before or around the same time you were vaccinated, so it may be helpful to get tested.

Managing discomfort after vaccination

Pain relievers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen are effective in managing vaccine side effects including pain where the shot was given, body aches, and fever **after** you get vaccinated. Cool cloths may relieve the swelling or pain at the injection site. Move or exercise your arm. Take the medicine you usually take when you have pain or fever or follow the instructions of your health care provider.

Reporting vaccine side effects

If you have a severe reaction, contact your health care provider. If it is an emergency, go to a hospital or call 911. Providers should report severe reactions (those that require some type of medical care) to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#). This reporting system helps the CDC and FDA continue to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

V-safe

CDC has also launched a new patient reporting tool for COVID-19 vaccine. It is a smartphone app called v-safe. This app can help with active monitoring for COVID-19 vaccine safety after you get the COVID-19 vaccine. Your health care provider will give you more information on v-safe. You can learn more at [V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker](#) and access an information sheet and flyers in multiple languages at [V-safe Print Resources](#).

Getting COVID-19 after being vaccinated

Vaccine breakthrough cases (where someone becomes sick with the disease after being up to date on vaccinations) are expected and normal. No vaccine works 100% of the time, but there is still a lot of value in getting vaccinated. We know these vaccines are safe and help keep people from ending up in the hospital or dying from COVID-19. If you do get sick, it is likely that your symptoms will be milder than if you didn't get vaccinated.

Based on available data, COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases remain uncommon. You can learn more about breakthrough data in Minnesota at [COVID-19 Vaccine Breakthrough Weekly Update](#).

There are a few reasons we have started to see more vaccine breakthrough cases:

- As more people are vaccinated while COVID-19 virus is still in our communities (especially when a lot of disease is circulating), more of the cases we identify will be in vaccinated people. The vaccine will never fully protect everyone from disease.
- Things people choose to do may be more or less risky, such as going to large gatherings, hanging out in crowded settings, traveling, etc. It also depends on how much COVID-19 virus is currently circulating in a community and vaccination rates.

Vaccination continues to be the best tool in our prevention toolbox against COVID-19. People who are vaccinated will have a less severe illness and are much less likely to be hospitalized or die than people with similar risk factors who are not vaccinated. It is still important to continue to use other tools for best protection, such as masking, frequent handwashing, getting tested when needed, and keeping physical distance from others.

Most Minnesotans who are newly diagnosed with COVID-19 or admitted to the hospital are unvaccinated. With highly-contagious variants circulating in Minnesota, it has never been more important to get vaccinated.

People who have been vaccinated should make sure they still get tested if they have symptoms of COVID-19 disease.