

# FACT

## Effects of COVID-19 Vaccines

Scientific data demonstrate that the long-term effects of COVID-19 infections are far more serious than any minimal side effects caused by vaccinations. Here are facts on vaccine side effects and details on the real devastating impact of COVID-19 infections on people across our communities.

**FACT: COVID-19 has become the leading cause of death in the United States.**

The COVID-19 vaccines can have mild side effects, but the vast majority are very short term and are not serious or dangerous. While some people experience one to two days of discomfort where they were injected, body aches, headaches or fever, these are signs that the vaccine is working to stimulate your immune system. The vaccines are not resulting in any serious illnesses or deaths.

**FACT: Vaccines protect new mothers and mothers-to-be from serious illness.**

Meanwhile, pregnant and recently pregnant women are at an increased risk for severe illness, including preterm birth, from COVID-19 compared to nonpregnant women. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that all eligible persons, including pregnant and lactating individuals, receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, there is no evidence that female or male fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines.

**FACT: It is impossible for COVID-19 vaccines to alter your DNA.**

Both mRNA and viral vector COVID-19 vaccines deliver instructions to our cells to start building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Once those instructions are transcribed, both the mRNA and viral vector vaccines degrade rapidly in your body. The mRNA does not enter the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. The viral vectors used in COVID-19 vaccines are non-replicating and don't have the machinery to insert its DNA into our cellular DNA. Both types of vaccines get broken down by your body's cells and are gone within a few days.

**FACT: The vaccine developers did not skip any testing steps throughout the development process.**

This method of vaccination has been under development for almost two decades and has proven safer than previous methods. Additionally, because COVID-19 is so contagious and widespread, it did not take long to see if the vaccine worked for the study volunteers who were vaccinated. More than 4.1 billion doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been given globally, and almost 350 million have been given in the U.S.

**FACT: Vaccines do not shed or release their components into your body.**

Vaccine shedding is the term used to describe the release of any of the vaccine components in or outside of the body. Vaccine shedding can only occur when a vaccine contains a weakened version of the virus, however, none of the vaccines being used in the U.S. contain a live virus.

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Schedule your vaccination appointment on the MyChart portal today. Visit [ochsnerlsuhs.org/vaccine](https://ochsnerlsuhs.org/vaccine) for more facts, or call **844-888-2772** with any additional questions. For more COVID-19 information and resources, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov](https://cdc.gov)) or the Louisiana Department of Health ([ldh.la.gov](https://ldh.la.gov)) website.