



AmeriHealth Caritas
District of Columbia

To: AmeriHealth Caritas DC Providers
Date: March 4, 2021
Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Updates from DC Health

Below is an update from DC Health sent on March 2, 2021, regarding COVID-19 vaccines. Included with this notice are four COVID-19 vaccine informational documents that may be helpful for you and your patients. We encourage enrollees who are seeking vaccine appointments to sign up for email alerts at coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine [coronavirus.dc.gov].

Dear COVID-19 Vaccine Stakeholder,

On February 27th, the U.S. Food and Drug Administrations issued an emergency use authorization ([EUA](https://www.fda.gov)) [[fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov)] for the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine. On February 28th and March 1st, the [CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](https://www.cdc.gov) [[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)] met to review the safety, effectiveness, and other clinical considerations for this vaccine. On March 2nd, the CDC published the [MMWR](https://www.cdc.gov) [[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)] - The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendation for Use of Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine.

Shortly after this publication, the DC Health Scientific Advisory Committee convened to

- receive an overview of the current status of the District's COVID-19 Vaccination program from Dr. Nesbitt, and to
- review safety and effectiveness data of the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine from Dr. Preetha Iyengar.

The meeting can be viewed at [this link](https://dcnet.webex.com) [dcnet.webex.com].

We are excited that another safe and very effective vaccine is available for the District and the country. The District will be receiving 6,000 doses of this vaccine initially. Currently we do not know the frequency nor amount for future deliveries.

Included in the attachments are a:

- Fact sheet for the Janssen vaccine
- Comparison chart for the Moderna, Pfizer, and Janssen vaccine
- Cartoon illustration explaining how the Janssen vaccine works
- General fact sheet for COVID-19 vaccines

Please use these tools as you discuss this safe and effective vaccine with your patients, families, friends, and communities.



As always, we recommend tuning in to the Mayor's Press Conferences on Monday mornings for the latest COVID-19 vaccine program updates; it is live streamed on Twitter @MayorBowser. If you need additional information, please contact us at covid-19.vaccine@dc.gov or visit coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine [coronavirus.dc.gov].

Thank you,

Ankoor Shah, MD, MBA, MPH
COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Group
District of Columbia Emergency Operations Center

PROTECT YOURSELF.

Get the COVID-19 vaccine.



Vaccines to significantly reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19 has become available. Currently, access is limited to individuals 65 years of age and older; individuals 16- 64 years of age who have a qualifying medical condition; and/or individuals who are a member of an eligible workforce group. There are many reasons to get the vaccine when it becomes available. The most compelling one is that it could protect you and those around you from this life-threatening virus.

FOUR REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD GET THE COVID-19 VACCINE

1

IT'S SAFE.

The FDA will only approve vaccines for release under these emergency conditions that have data proving its safety and that meet or exceed minimum efficacy thresholds.

2

IT'S EFFECTIVE.

It's the most effective way to prevent getting COVID-19, and experts believe it may help you from getting seriously ill even if (much like the flu) you do get the virus.

3

IT'S FREE!

Providers must vaccinate persons regardless of their ability to pay. Providers may be able to charge an office visit fee, or administration fee, though this fee can be billed to insurance or Medicare/Medicaid.

4

MINIMAL SIDE EFFECTS.

More than 70,000 people who voluntarily got the vaccine in clinical trials had very low rates of side effects, most common were sore arms at the injection site, some fever or body aches.

OTHER IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

- ✔ The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines use two shots, administered three weeks apart, to provide the best protection. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a single shot.
- ✔ The vaccine has been tested on more than 70,000 people who volunteered for large-scale clinical trials already.
- ✔ Vaccine manufacturers also asked thousands of people from communities of color including Black and Latinx/a/o individuals to participate in their clinical trials.
- ✔ If you have tested positive for COVID-19, ask your health care provider if you should be vaccinated.
- ✔ You will still need to practice other precautions like wearing a mask, social distancing, handwashing and other hygiene measures until public health officials say otherwise.
- ✔ At this time, the vaccine is not recommended for children under 16 years of age. Manufacturers are expanding their research trials so recommendations may be updated at a later date.




For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, visit coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine

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THE COVID-19 VACCINE:

Moderna, Pfizer, Janssen (Johnson & Johnson)

	Moderna	Pfizer	Janssen (J&J)
Safe and Effective?			
Side Effects	83.9% - 90.5% of participants had short-term pain at the injection site, and 71.9% - 81.9% of participants experienced side effects	87% of participants had short-term pain at the injection site and 77% of participants experienced side effects	48.6% of participants had short-term pain at the injection site, and 33.2% - 38.9% experienced side effects (e.g. fever, fatigue, headache, chills)
Large Clinical Trial Size	30,000 participant randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial	43,000 participant randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial	44,000 participant randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial
Storage and Handling	Stored in freezer, but stable in refrigerator for 30 days	Stored in ultra-cold freezers	Stored in temperatures 36 to 46 degrees Fahrenheit
Dosing	(0.5 ml) - two doses, one month (28 days) apart	(0.3 ml) - two doses, three weeks (21 days) apart	(0.5 ml) single dose
Age Range	18 years and older	16 years and older	18 years and older



DC Health recommends taking the first vaccine available to you.

JANSSEN

(JOHNSON & JOHNSON)

COVID-19 VACCINE



As of March 2021, Pfizer, Moderna, and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccines have received emergency use authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Below are a few important facts about the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine.

EFFECTIVENESS

The Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine has been proven effective at preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 disease.

SIDE EFFECTS

48.6% of participants had short-term pain at the injection site, and 33.2% - 38.9% experienced side effects (e.g. fever, fatigue, headache, chills)

LARGE CLINICAL TRIAL SIZE

44,000 participant randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial

STORAGE & HANDLING

Stored in temperatures
36 - 46F

DOSING

(.5 ml) single dose

AGE RANGE

18 years and older



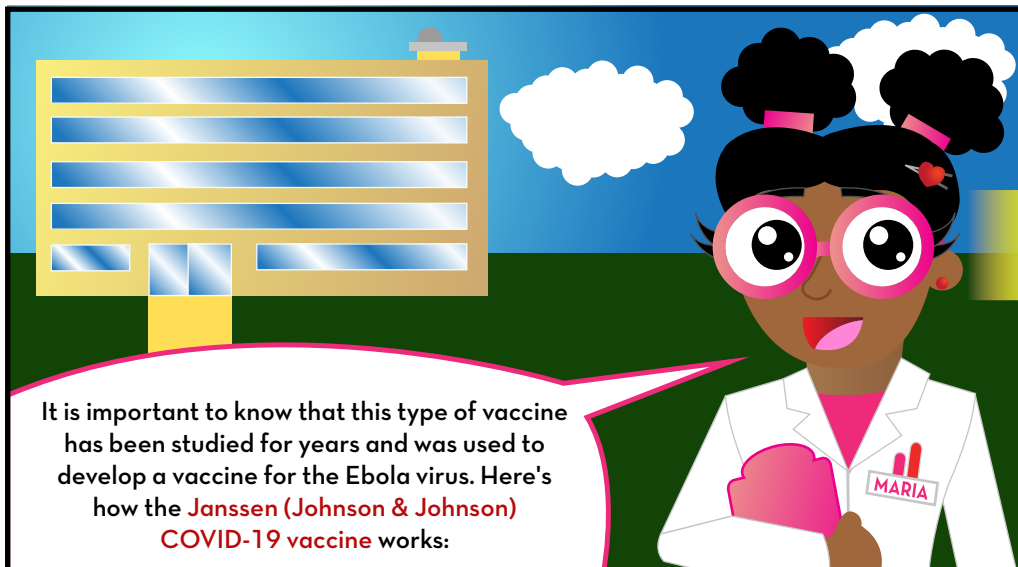
DC Health recommends taking the first vaccine available to you.

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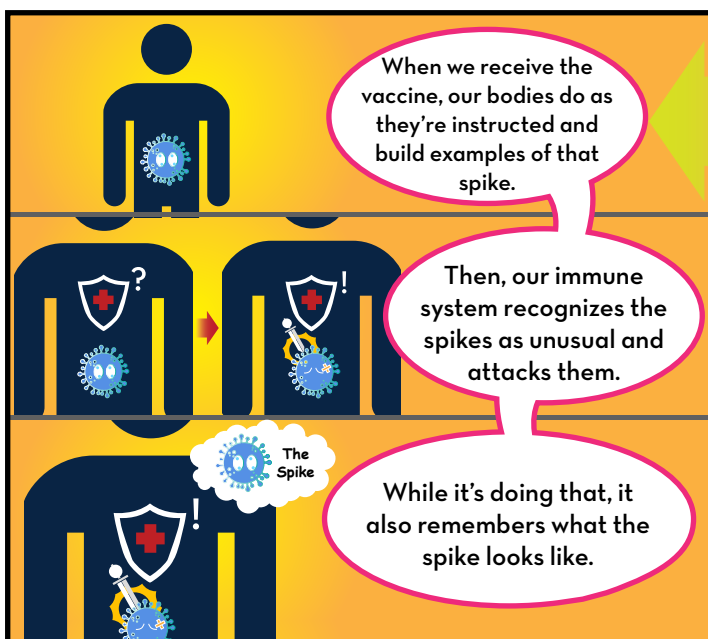
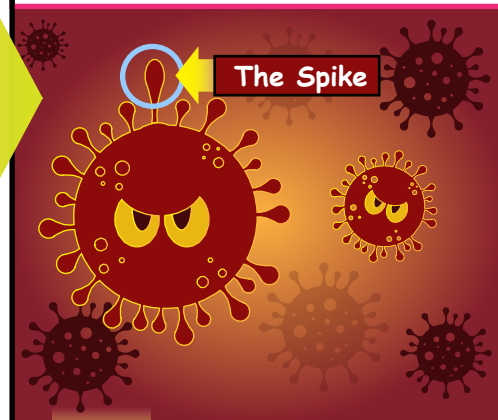
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MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

HOW DOES THE JANSSEN (JOHNSON & JOHNSON) COVID-19 VACCINE WORK?



It is important to know that this type of vaccine has been studied for years and was used to develop a vaccine for the Ebola virus. Here's how the **Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine** works:

Scientists isolated one part of the virus - **the spike** - that they could use to teach our bodies what to look out for.

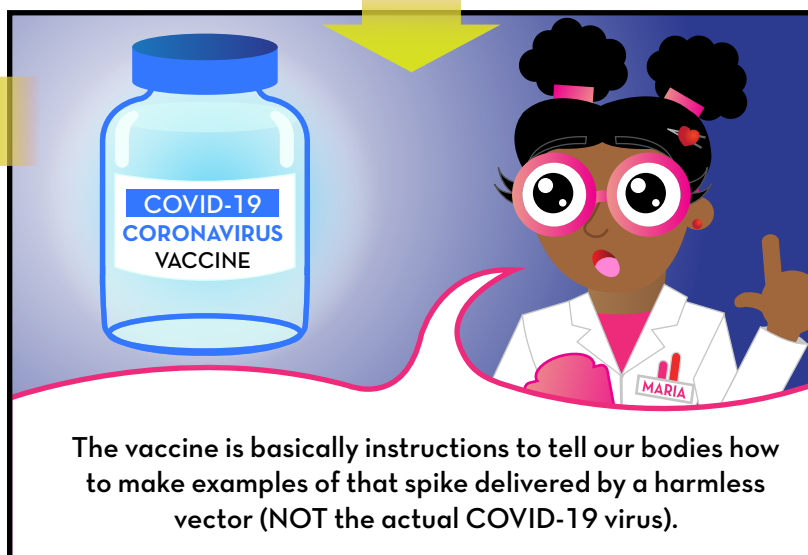


When we receive the vaccine, our bodies do as they're instructed and build examples of that spike.

Then, our immune system recognizes the spikes as unusual and attacks them.

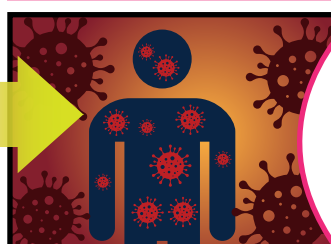
The Spike

While it's doing that, it also remembers what the spike looks like.




The vaccine is basically instructions to tell our bodies how to make examples of that spike delivered by a harmless vector (NOT the actual COVID-19 virus).

Because it is just the spike and not an actual virus, you will not get sick when your body builds an example spike. The response some people have to the vaccine (headache, fever, chills, sore arm) is because your immune system is recognizing something new and unusual and launching an attack on it.



Without the vaccine, when the coronavirus enters your body, your immune system does not recognize quick enough that it is bad, and that gives the virus plenty of time to spread through your system and make you sick. Without the vaccine, your immune system is left desperately trying to play catch up as the virus spreads through your body.



With the vaccine, your body already knows to be on the lookout for that spike. If you are vaccinated, when the coronavirus enters your system, your body immediately gets to work destroying it.

The vaccine does **NOT** involve injecting you with COVID-19 and it does **NOT** change your DNA or your genetic code.