

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

# VACCINATION 101

All you need to know about vaccines



# COVID-19 VACCINATION INTRODUCTION



Nelson Mandela University is part of the national plan to administer the COVID-19 vaccine in the weeks and months ahead.

This book offers factual information about the vaccine gleaned from various credible sources, including our own professional nursing colleagues, who will be administering the vaccine on our campuses.

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For additional vaccine-related information, please consult the vaccine webpage on our website

[www.mandela.ac.za/coronavirus](http://www.mandela.ac.za/coronavirus)

## WHAT IS A VACCINE?

- A vaccine is a medicine that helps the body fight infections and illnesses.
- Vaccines have stopped millions of children from getting sick and dying from diseases like measles, polio and mumps.
- Many adults have had vaccines against diseases like the flu and tetanus.
- Most vaccines are given by injection.

## HOW DOES A VACCINE WORK?

- A vaccine works by helping the body recognise a new sickness, such as COVID-19, and then teaches the body how to fight it.
- When a person comes into contact with this sickness, their body is then ready to fight it and the person does not get sick.

## WHY DO WE USE VACCINES?

- Vaccines save lives.
- Vaccines have saved millions of people all over the world from getting sick and even dying from sicknesses such as measles and polio.
- They are a key intervention in stopping millions of people from getting sick and even dying from COVID-19.

## WHAT IS THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

- This is a new vaccine that helps the body to fight the COVID-19 virus.
- It works in the same way that the many other vaccines do.
- It helps the body recognise this new sickness. It then prepares the body to fight the virus, so we do not get sick.

## WHAT IS HERD IMMUNITY?

- When a lot of people in a community are vaccinated, the virus has a hard time circulating because most of the people it encounters are immune.
- The more people that are vaccinated, the less likely people who are unable to be protected by vaccines are at risk of even being exposed to the virus. This is called herd immunity.
- No single vaccine provides 100% protection, and herd immunity does not provide full protection to those who cannot safely be vaccinated.

## IS THE COVID-19 VACCINE SAFE?

- Yes. The vaccine that will be used in South Africa is safe.
- It has already been given to millions of people around the world, young and old, rich and poor.
- The vaccines have been developed and tested by scientists around the world, including in South Africa.
- South Africa has some of the best doctors and nurses in the world. They will not allow us to use a vaccine that is not safe.
- Although it was developed very quickly to save lives, it has gone through all the tests, including approvals from a panel of experts from the World Health Organisation, that other vaccines go through.

## WHERE IS SOUTH AFRICA GETTING ITS VACCINES FROM?

- South Africa is getting its vaccines from various suppliers around the globe in a bid to vaccinate as many people as possible as quickly as possible. Some vaccines are easier to store than others and some are more effective against the new South African variant, but each approved vaccine will help deter the spread of the virus.

## HOW IS THE COVID-19 VACCINE GIVEN?

- The vaccine will be given by a trained health care worker in places like hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, or doctors' surgeries, and in the case of Nelson Mandela University, it will be administered by colleagues at the COVID-19 screening centre.
- It is given as an injection in the arm.
- For it to work properly, you need two injections.
- You will get the second injection between four and 12 weeks after the first one.
- Your health care worker will tell you when to come back for the second injection.
- It is very important that you get both injections.

## WILL THE VACCINE MAKE ME SICK WITH COVID-19?

- No, the vaccine will not make you sick with COVID-19. It stops you getting sick from COVID-19.

## HOW WILL I FEEL AFTER THE INJECTION?

- Most people will have a sore arm for a few days but will feel fine.
- Some people may have sore muscles, feel a little tired, have a headache, or may feel hot. These experiences mean that the vaccination is working, and they will go away in one or two days.

## WILL THE VACCINE STOP ME GETTING COVID-19?

- Yes. It will stop most people who get the vaccine from getting sick with COVID-19.
- A very small number of people might still get a little sick from COVID-19 after they have been vaccinated. Without the vaccination they may have become very ill and even died.

## WHO WILL GET THE VACCINE?

- Our government wants most of our people in South Africa, at least 40 million, to be vaccinated by the end of 2021.
- The more of us that are protected against COVID-19, the quicker the sickness will go away.

## WAS THERE A DELIBERATE DELAY IN ACQUIRING COVID-19 VACCINE FOR SOUTH AFRICANS?

- There has been no deliberate delay to access the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The country was selecting vaccines on their safety and efficacy, ease of use, storage, distribution, supply sustainability and cost.

## WHO IS BUYING THE COVID-19 VACCINE FOR SOUTH AFRICA?

- Government will source, distribute and oversee the rollout of the vaccine. It is the sole purchaser of vaccines and will distribute it to provincial governments and the private sector.
- A national register for COVID-19 vaccinations will be established.
- The vaccination system will be based on a pre-vaccination registration and appointment system. All those vaccinated will be placed on a national register and provided with a vaccination card.
- A national rollout committee will oversee the vaccine implementation in both the public and private sectors.

## WILL WE ALL GET THE VACCINE AT THE SAME TIME?

- No. There are not enough vaccines in the world at the moment to give everyone the vaccine now.
- However, the government is committed to making sure that they will have enough vaccines this year for most people in the country.
- The vaccine will be rolled out in three phases.

## WHO WILL GET IT FIRST?

- We need to protect people who are most at risk of getting sick from COVID-19 first.
- Beginning in February:

# PHASES

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## PHASE 1

Our health care workers will get the vaccine. If they get sick, there is no one to care for the rest of us.

## PHASE 2

These four groups of people:

- Essential workers: People who have to work to keep our country going, such as the police, lecturers, teachers, municipal workers, security people, farmers and food shop workers.
- People over 60 years old.
- People who work and live in places where there are lots of people, like prisons, old age homes, care homes, institutions like universities and churches.
- People over 18 who have comorbidities - other sicknesses, such as TB, HIV, or poorly controlled diabetes.

## PHASE 3

The rest of the country.

**NOTE:** Information for each phase of the administration of the vaccine will be communicated, as the vaccines and processes are put in place.

## CAN EVERYONE HAVE THE VACCINE?

- Most people can safely have the vaccine.
- But before you are given it, the health care worker will ask you some questions to check your health.
- You will not be given the vaccine unless it is safe for you.

## WHY SHOULD I HAVE THE VACCINE?

- We can all get COVID-19. Some of us will get it and not even know that we have it and infect others who can get very ill and even die.
- The more people who have the vaccine, the less chance there is that the virus can spread in our communities.

## I HAVE ALREADY HAD COVID-19, DO I STILL NEED THE VACCINE?

- Yes. Some people are getting COVID-19 for the second time.
- The vaccine will help to prevent you from getting sick again.

## HOW LONG WILL THE VACCINE TAKE TO WORK?

- You will have some protection after the first injection.
- You will be most protected about seven days after the second injection.

## HOW LONG WILL I BE PROTECTED AGAINST COVID-19 AFTER HAVING HAD THE VACCINE?

- This is a new illness, so we do not know yet how long you are protected for.
- Doctors hope that it will be for a long time, similar to protection offered to other diseases by vaccines.

## AFTER THE VACCINE CAN I STOP WEARING A MASK?

- No. There is still a small chance that you will contract COVID-19, and you may infect other people again.

Please continue to:

**Wear a mask**

**Wash and sanitise your hands regularly**

**Keep your distance**

**Keep windows open**

**Avoid crowds**



# TRUE

# V

# FALSE

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With so much misinformation circulating around the coronavirus pandemic and now the vaccine, we hope you will find the following useful:

## FALSE

- The vaccine was developed too quickly and proper safety checks were not completed.

## TRUE

- The world was able to develop the vaccine quickly because scientists and governments around the world worked together for the public good. They could make use of years of previous research on related viruses, faster ways to manufacture vaccines, and regulators moving more quickly than normal. The COVID-19 vaccine has passed all the same tests as the other vaccines we already take.

## FALSE

- The vaccine will change my DNA.

## TRUE

- DNA are the building blocks that make you who you are. The vaccine will not change your DNA or who you are.
- The vaccine teaches your body how to recognise the virus and learn how to fight it.

## **FALSE**

- The vaccine contains a microchip that will be used to track and control me.

## **TRUE**

- The vaccine does not contain a microchip.
- The vaccine **CANNOT** be used to track you or save your personal information.

## **FALSE**

- 5G networks cause the coronavirus through radiation emissions.

## **TRUE**

- No virus can travel through radio waves and mobile networks.
- COVID-19 is spreading in many countries that do not have 5G mobile networks.

## **FALSE**

- The vaccine has the mark of the Beast – 666.

## **TRUE**

- Vaccines have no link to any religion. Vaccines cannot be filled with spirits or demons.
- The vaccine was developed to save our lives, not to bewitch, possess or control us.

## **FALSE**

- The vaccine is a way for the West to oppress Africa again.

## **TRUE**

- The vaccine was not just the work of Western or rich countries. It was a worldwide effort.
- This effort brought together knowledge from across the world. This includes our own excellent doctors and scientists. It has also been tested here in South Africa.



Our thanks go to Nelson Mandela University's health professionals; the Department of Health; the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Health; Church in Action; Heartlines and the South African Council of Churches.