



THE 12 COMMON MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINATION

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MYTH 1: NATURAL IMMUNITY (IMMUNITY AFTER NATURAL INFECTION) IS BETTER THAN VACCINE IMMUNITY

Vaccines allow your body to build immunity without the damaging effects the actual diseases can have. COVID-19 can cause serious complications and can be deadly. There are no specific treatments for COVID-19. It is far smarter to avoid the risk. (For more information go to: [WHO: How Do Vaccines Work?](#))

MYTH 2: I HAVE A STRONG IMMUNITY AND WILL HANDLE THE ILLNESS WITHOUT A PROBLEM

COVID-19 vaccines produce protection against the disease, as a result of developing an immune response to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Developing immunity through vaccination means there is a reduced risk of developing the illness and its consequences. This immunity helps you fight the virus if exposed. Getting vaccinated may also protect people around you, because if you are protected from getting infected and from disease, you are less likely to infect someone else. This is particularly important to protect people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, such as healthcare providers, older or elderly adults, and people with other medical conditions.

MYTH 3: VACCINE WAS DEVELOPED TOO QUICKLY WITHOUT PROPER RESEARCH AND IT IS NOT SAFE

There are strict protections in place to help ensure the safety of all COVID-19 vaccines. Before receiving validation from WHO and national regulatory agencies, COVID-19 vaccines must undergo rigorous testing in clinical trials to prove that they meet internationally agreed benchmarks for safety and effectiveness.

Unprecedented scientific collaborations have allowed COVID-19 vaccine research, development, and authorizations to be completed in record time – to meet the urgent need for COVID-19 vaccines while maintaining high safety standards. As with all vaccines, WHO and regulatory authorities will continuously monitor the use of COVID-19 vaccines to confirm that they remain safe for all who receive them. See information published by the World Health Organization: [Vaccine Safety Q&A](#).

MYTH 4: IF YOU ALREADY HAD COVID-19, YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE VACCINATED

Even if you have already had COVID-19, WHO recommends that individuals be vaccinated. The protection that someone gains from having COVID-19 will vary from person to person, and it is also not known how long natural immunity might last. Those who have previously had COVID-19 infection should still receive COVID-19 vaccination. (Source: [WHO Information on COVID-19 Vaccines](#))

MYTH 5: VACCINES CONTAIN TOXIC INGREDIENTS THAT CAN HARM YOU

While the ingredients in the labels of vaccines can look intimidating, they are usually found naturally in the body, the food we eat, and the environment around us - for example, in tuna. The amounts in vaccines are very small. Additionally, vaccines are tested and go through rigorous and lengthy scientific trials as well as certification processes with WHO and national regulatory



agencies to ensure that they are safe and effective.(Source [PAHO: Debunking Immunization Myths](#))

MYTH 6: COVID-19 VACCINES CAN GIVE YOU COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccine do not cause COVID-19 infection. Vaccines teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. Typical side effects include pain at the injection site, fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, and diarrhea. These symptoms are normal and are signs that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection. If symptoms are persistent and prolonged, they should not be attributed to COVID-19 vaccine side effects and testing for COVID-19 should occur. (Source: [CDC: Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)) For more information: [WHO: Side Effects of COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

MYTH 7: THE ASTRA ZENECA VACCINE IS DANGEROUS

The WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (WHO GACVS) has found that the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine (Vaxzevria and Covishield) is effective at preventing serious side effects of COVID-19 infection that can cause hospitalization and death. The most common side effects from the vaccine are mild to moderate that usually resolve in a few days. The most serious side effects are very rare but can cause blood clots with low platelets. Recent data from the UK suggests the risk these serious sides effects is approximately four cases per million adults (1 case per 250 000) who receive the vaccine.

The WHO GACVS has also stated that the benefits of vaccination are far greater than the risk of the rare side effect. In addition to the benefits in preventing severe disease and death due to COVID-19, the vaccine offers protection against overall COVID-19 and complications from 'long COVID' and death, potential protection for close contacts and the community by preventing transmission, and a risk reduction of severe disease from some variant strains of the virus. (Source: [WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety \(GACVS\)](#) and [Interim statement of the COVID-19 subcommittee of the WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety on AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine](#)). For more information on the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, see the vaccine [Fact Sheet](#).

MYTH 8: COVID-19 VACCINES CAN COMPROMISE YOUR FERTILITY

WHO has stated that if you are trying to become pregnant now or want to get pregnant in the future, you may get a COVID-19 vaccine when one is available to you. There is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. In addition, there is no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines. Like all vaccines, scientists are studying COVID-19 vaccines carefully for side effects now and will continue to study them for many years. (Source: [WHO: Vaccines Safety](#)) Of course, you should always consult your own doctor when making these decisions.

MYTH 9: VACCINES CONTAIN MICRO-CHIPS

No. See this: [REUTERS](#); [BBC](#); [Business Insider](#); [EU External Action Service](#)

MYTH 10: THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE VACCINE ARE REALLY BAD

WHO has stated that like any vaccine, COVID-19 vaccines can cause mild side effects, such as a low-grade fever or pain or redness at the injection site. [Most reactions to vaccines are mild and go away within a few days on their own. More serious or



long-lasting side effects to vaccines are possible but rare]. Vaccine side effects are continually monitored by local authorities to detect rare adverse events. Reported side effects to COVID-19 vaccines have mostly been mild to moderate and short-lasting. They include fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, diarrhea, and pain at the injection site. The chances of any of these side effects following vaccination differ according to the specific COVID-19 vaccine. (See more information published by the World Health Organization: [Vaccine Safety Q&A](#)).

MYTH 11: THE VACCINE DOES NOT ALWAYS WORK SO I SHOULD NOT BOTHER TO GET ONE

While several COVID-19 vaccines appear to have high levels of efficacy, no vaccine is 100% protective. As a result, there may be a small percentage of people who do not develop protection after COVID-19 vaccination. In addition to a vaccine's specific characteristics, several factors such as a person's age, their underlying health conditions or previous exposure to COVID-19 may have an impact on a vaccine's effectiveness. It is also not yet known how long immunity from different COVID-19 vaccines will last. That is one reason why, even after vaccination, we must continue using all public health measures that work, such as physical distancing, masks, and handwashing.

MYTH 12: AFTER VACCINATION I CAN STOP TAKING PRECAUTIONS AND GO BACK TO LIFE AS IT WAS PRE COVID-19

Vaccination protects you from getting seriously ill and dying from COVID-19. For the first fourteen days after getting a vaccination, you do not have significant levels of protection. For a single dose vaccine, immunity will generally occur two weeks after vaccination. For two-dose vaccines, both doses are needed to achieve are required to provide the highest level of best immunity possible. While a COVID-19 vaccine will protect you from serious illness and death, the extent to which it keeps you from being infected **and passing the virus on to others is unknown** although preliminary data suggests there are protective effects. To help keep others safe, continue to maintain at least a 1-2 meter distance from others, cover a cough or sneeze in your elbow, clean your hands frequently and wear a mask, particularly in enclosed, crowded or poorly ventilated spaces. Always follow guidance from local authorities based on the situation and risk where you live. (Source: [WHO Information on COVID-19 Vaccines](#))

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