FACT SHEET: Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine (Spikevax) Benefits and Risks

Based on careful review by national experts, we know the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines far outweigh the risks. Understand the benefits and risks of receiving the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine, which protects against the worst outcomes of COVID-19 infection. It is your choice to receive this vaccine.

About this Vaccine

This vaccine has been fully approved by the FDA for people aged 18 years and older. This vaccine has FDA emergency use authorization for people aged 6 months through 17 years. This vaccine is a two-dose series, given four to eight weeks apart, injected into the muscle of the upper arm.

Benefits of this Vaccine

This vaccine has been shown to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19.

What to Expect When You Get the Vaccine

You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building immunity against the disease. Side effects may include pain or swelling at the injection site, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, nausea, or fever. Side effects should go away within a few days.

Risks Associated with this Vaccine

While there are small risks to getting the COVID-19 vaccine, the benefits of getting vaccinated outweigh the risks. Risks include:
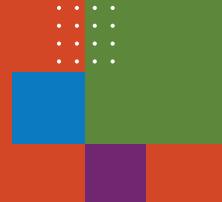
- Rare Severe Allergic Reaction: There is a remote chance the vaccine could cause a severe allergic reaction (difficulty breathing, swelling of face and throat, fast heartbeat, bad rash all over your body, dizziness, weakness), which would usually occur a few minutes to one hour after getting the dose. If you experience a severe allergic reaction, call 9-1-1, or go to the nearest hospital.

- Rare Myocarditis and Pericarditis: There have been rare cases of myocarditis and pericarditis following Moderna COVID-19 vaccination. In most of these reported cases, patients were male, young adults who reported shortness of breath and chest pain following their second dose. When they presented for medical care, they responded well to medications and rest, seeing a prompt improvement of symptoms. You should seek medical attention if you experience symptoms of myocarditis or pericarditis, which may include chest pain, shortness of breath, or abnormal heartbeat (beating fast, fluttering, or pounding).

If You Experience Side Effects

If you experience a severe allergic reaction, call 9-1-1, or go to the nearest hospital. Call the vaccination provider or your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

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Vaccination Options

It is your choice to receive this vaccine and not getting it will not change your standard medical care. Other vaccines to prevent COVID-19 are available. Learn more about your options by reading the Pfizer COVID-19 (Comirnaty) Vaccine Benefits and Risks Factsheet.

Boosters

Immunity against disease and infection naturally wanes over time. A booster dose is a normal part of most vaccine series to ensure a person maintains optimal immunity against infection from a disease. Booster doses enhance protection against severe COVID-19, restoring immunity that might have faded since first doses were given. mRNA vaccines, including Moderna, may be used for booster doses by all eligible people, regardless of vaccine type received for the primary series. (Please see the Pfizer Factsheet for information on the other mRNA vaccine.) The previous boosters were monovalent and targeted only the original strain while the updated boosters are bivalent and target the original strain and the Omicron strains that have been causing the more recent cases. Eligibility includes:

- **Everyone** aged 6 months and older should receive an Updated Booster (bivalent) dose following completion of their primary series or most recent booster (monovalent) dose.

More Information

For more information on dosing intervals, please see CDPH's COVID-19 Vaccine Timing by Age.

Additional information is available on the CDPH COVID-19 Booster website.