



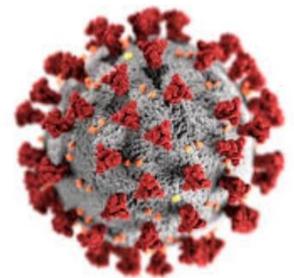
Information About Getting the Coronavirus Vaccine December 2020

Some people with developmental disabilities living in Maine are going to be asked if they want to get a Coronavirus vaccine. You may be asked to sign a consent form. This is some information to help you think about while you are deciding what to do.



The Coronavirus vaccine is a new medication that can prevent you from getting sick with “Covid,” “the Coronavirus” or “Covid-19”.

This vaccine helps protect your body so you don’t get sick with Covid-19.



It is given as a shot in your upper arm. You need to get 2 shots for the vaccine to work. The second shot is given 2 or 4 weeks after the first.

Right after the vaccination, some people’s arms hurt. Other people get sore muscles, a headache, or a sore throat that lasts a day or so.



After the second shot, it is very unlikely that you will be able to catch Covid-19.



Right now, there are not enough vaccines for everyone in Maine, so doctors, scientists, and government leaders have worked together to decide who can get the vaccine.

Hospital workers will get the vaccine so they will be able to keep taking care of people who are sick.



Next, people who might get really sick from Covid will be able to get the vaccine. This includes many people with developmental disabilities and their workers.



The vaccine is going to be given in different places, such as pharmacies, hospitals, or special clinics. You might not have any choices about where to get it or who gives it to you. That is because there is not enough for everyone yet. Your service provider or doctor can tell you how your vaccine will be given.



The coronavirus vaccine is free.





*Do I **have** to get the Covid-19 vaccine?*

If you do not have a guardian, it is your decision whether to get the vaccine or not. It is up to you to make the best choice for your health, and that may or may not be getting the vaccine.



If you do have a guardian, you can discuss how you feel about getting the vaccine with them. Your health care provider can answer your questions.

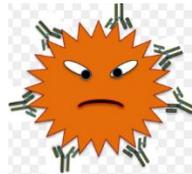
What is a vaccine?

A vaccine works by giving your body tools to fight off viruses that can make you sick.



Those tools are called “antibodies”. Antibodies are used by your immune system to fight off viruses. Each type of virus has its own type of antibodies. That is why vaccines only work for one type of illness.

How does the Covid vaccine work?



This vaccine uses a new type of technology called mRNA that teaches our bodies to fight off the coronavirus.

Is the coronavirus vaccine safe?



Yes!

The coronavirus vaccine(s) have been fully tested on lots of people, men and women of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.



I have heard some scary things about this vaccine.



There are a lot of rumors about this vaccine that are simply not true. To find out what is true it is a good idea to talk to someone who knows the facts, like a health care professional.

How can I make a good decision about being vaccinated?



Many people consider the risk vs. the benefit of taking the vaccine. Some questions you can think about:

- Do you have a condition make it more likely that you would become very sick from Covid?
- Do you live with, work with, or spend time with someone who is likely to become very sick from Covid?

Health problems like diabetes, heart disease and cancer can increase your risk from Covid. Having Down Syndrome or living in a group home can increase your risk from Covid. You can ask your health care provider if you are not sure if you are at high risk.

You can also talk to your health care provider (a doctor, nurse practitioner, or PA) about what are the best things for you to think about when making this decision.

