

mRNA vaccines

(Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna)

How do they work?

These vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) to encourage your body to make a small piece of the virus (the spike protein)

- The mRNA is like a recipe card that goes into your arm and makes one recipe for a brief time. The recipe is for a small part of the virus (the spike protein).
- When this spike protein is released from cells, the body recognizes it as foreign and the immune system responds.
- The vaccine can't give you COVID but this immune response causes the side effect symptoms (like aches and fever) but leads to improved immunity.
- mRNA is fragile and breaks down quickly in the body.

mRNA is not new, in fact, our bodies are full of it and any time you get a cold virus, the virus instructs your body to make its proteins in this same way (except then it makes the whole virus)

Pfizer

2 doses, 21 days apart

Moderna

2 doses, 28 days apart

How well do they work?

Pfizer

- 95% effective in preventing COVID with symptoms after second dose

Moderna

- 94% effective in preventing COVID with symptoms after second dose

Bottom Line:

These COVID vaccines are good at preventing people from getting very sick or dying of COVID-19. None contain products or mechanisms known to be harmful to pregnant people.

Viral vector vaccines

(Johnson & Johnson/Janssen, AstraZeneca [not available in US])

How do they work?

These vaccines use common cold viruses that doesn't infect you or make you sick to deliver a small piece of the virus (the spike protein)

- The body recognizes the spike protein as foreign, and the immune system responds.

Viral vector vaccines have been used before and the Ebola viral vector vaccine has been given to pregnant people without bad events.

Johnson & Johnson

1 dose

AstraZeneca

2 doses, 4-12 weeks apart

How well do they work?

Johnson & Johnson

- 66% effective in preventing COVID with symptoms
- 93% effective in preventing COVID hospitalizations
- 100% effective in preventing death from COVID

AstraZeneca

- 67-82% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID infection

Decision aid for vaccine in pregnancy and references at:

[FOAMcast.org/COVIDvacPregnancy](https://foamcast.org/COVIDvacPregnancy)
or scan QR code

