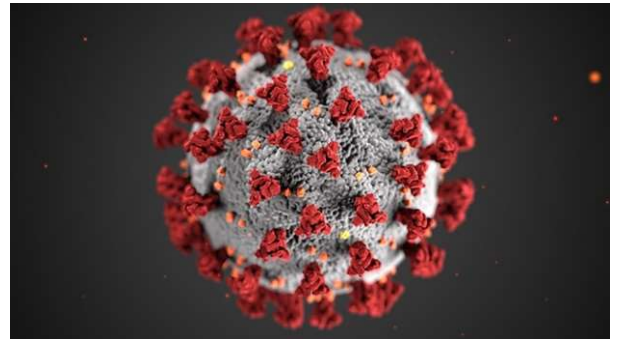


COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for People with Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective Disorder

Q: Why is it important for people with schizophrenia to get the vaccine?

A: If you experience psychosis, hear voices, take antipsychotic medications, or are diagnosed as having schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, you are at high risk of getting sick with COVID-19.

Scientists and doctors are not sure exactly why this is the case, but the data shows that people with schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder are at almost three times the risk of dying from COVID-19, compared to the general public.



Q: What is the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Although COVID-19 is very dangerous, vaccines have now become available to help prevent people from getting sick. Vaccines are injected medications that give your immune system directions for fighting infection.



There are three different COVID-19 vaccines available:

- Pfizer vaccine: two shots 21 days apart
- Moderna vaccine: two shots 28 days apart
- Johnson and Johnson vaccine: one shot

Q: Which vaccine should you take?

A: All of the vaccines are highly effective. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are both about 95% effective at keeping someone from getting sick with COVID-19. The Johnson and Johnson vaccine is about 75% effective at keeping someone from getting sick with COVID-19, but is nearly 100% effective at preventing hospitalization and intensive care.

All three types of vaccines are safe. They have gone through intense and rigorous testing. Although the vaccine developers did not specifically track if the people the vaccine was tested on had mental illness, scientists agree that the vaccine is safe for nearly everyone. Getting the vaccine can help save your life, and the lives of others. Health experts recommend getting whichever one is available to you first.

Q: What is it like to get vaccinated?

A: The vaccine is injected into your shoulder at the deltoid muscle. It may cause some soreness for a few days. Some people have mild flu-like symptoms after the injection, but these symptoms usually go away within a day or two. You may experience a headache, fever, or fatigue. These symptoms are a sign that the vaccine is working and promoting an immune response within your body. If you experience symptoms after the vaccine for more than two days, you should see a doctor. Even if you get sick after the first dose of the vaccine, you should still get the second dose.



Q: Can you still get sick after getting the vaccine?

A: It is possible to still get COVID-19 even after you have been vaccinated, but it is much much less likely. If you do get sick, your symptoms will be milder and less dangerous. If you already had COVID-19, you should still get the vaccine to prevent you from getting it again. You should talk to your doctor for more information.



Q: How do you schedule an appointment for the vaccine?

A: When scheduling your appointment for the vaccine, you may need to make an appointment for the second dose at the same time. After you get the vaccine, you will be given a card with information about which vaccine you received and

when you need to return. Talk to your doctor, case manager, pharmacy, or local health department about scheduling your appointment.

Q: After you get vaccinated, can you stop social distancing?

A: After you get vaccinated, you will still need to wear a mask in public, avoid crowded spaces, wash your hands frequently, and stay six feet apart from others. The vaccine takes two weeks after the second dose to be fully effective.

