

## VACCINES

Keeping you up to date on the latest developments for a COVID-19 vaccine is our top priority. It will be an important way to slow the spread of the disease. That's why we are committed to helping you find vaccine information and get the vaccine. Your health care provider can help you understand more about the vaccine and your health.

Several trials from multiple companies are happening now, with promising results that you may have read about. It's also helpful to know that the [U.S. Food & Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) has a review process that it completes before it will authorize vaccines for emergency use by the general public.

**The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been authorized by the FDA.** FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines are covered at \$0 cost-share during national public health emergency period. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [state health departments](#) are advising who can get the vaccines and when. Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines [here](#).

Both FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine require two doses several weeks apart. If you receive a vaccine that requires two doses, you will need to get your second dose in the given time frame after your first dose.

Check your risk for COVID-19 using our [symptom checker](#). Find a diagnostic testing center using our [testing locator](#). Or learn what you need to know about [COVID-19 vaccines](#). Visit your [state health department](#) for information on COVID-19 vaccine availability in your area.

### What should members know about COVID-19 vaccines? Update 12/21

COVID-19 vaccines are an important step in slowing the spread of the disease. We are committed to helping you stay informed on COVID-19 vaccines and encourage you to discuss the vaccine with your health care provider.

#### 1. There is a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by the FDA

The [U.S. Food & Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) has authorized two COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use. These vaccines were developed to protect people from COVID-19 and both require two doses. Be sure to follow the vaccination instructions from the manufacturer. You should also continue to follow public health safety guidelines to help slow the spread of the disease.

Several trials from multiple companies are continuing, with promising results that you may have read about. It's also helpful to know that the FDA has a [review process](#) that it completes before it

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will authorize vaccines for emergency use by the general public. The CDC is your best resource for the latest information on [FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines](#).

## 2. The COVID-19 vaccine will have limited availability at first

Vaccine distribution is being coordinated by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and [state health departments](#). Since supplies are limited at this time, health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities will be the first to be vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccines may be more available in the spring to mid-year time frame as additional vaccines are FDA-authorized, produced and distributed. The goal will be for you to have the information you need about vaccines and to get the COVID-19 vaccine easily and conveniently. UnitedHealthcare's COVID-19 [consumer site](#) and the member's [online UnitedHealthcare account](#) will have the latest information for members.

The [state health department](#) is the best resource for information on COVID-19 vaccine availability in your area.

## 3. Members will be able to get the vaccine at no charge

Members will be able to get the vaccine at \$0 cost-share (copayments, deductibles and co-insurance) as noted below, no matter where they get the vaccine and including when 2 doses are required. In fact, members shouldn't receive a bill for the COVID-19 vaccine.

- **Employer and Individual\* health plans:** Members will have \$0 cost-share for both in- and out-of-network providers through the national public health emergency period.
- **Medicare health plans:** Members will have \$0 cost-share on vaccines at both in- and out-of-network providers through Dec. 31, 2021.
- **Medicaid members in UnitedHealthcare Community Plans:** Members will have \$0 cost-share for both in- and out-of-network providers through the national public health emergency period. State variations and regulations may apply during this time. Please review the [UnitedHealthcare Community Plan website](#) and your state's site for the latest information.
- Be sure to follow the vaccination instructions, which you will receive when you get the vaccine. Most FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines will require a second dose. You will need to get both doses in the required time frame to have protection from COVID-19. To help slow the spread of the disease, it's important you continue to wear a face mask, physically distancing and wash your hands regularly.
- Members who have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine should speak with their primary care provider or a health care professional regarding vaccine recommendations given their specific health conditions.

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- Members should plan on bringing specific documents with them to get their COVID-19 vaccine, including their insurance card or Medicare insurance card as well as their health status information.
- Once a member gets the COVID-19 vaccine, members should keep their COVID-19 vaccination documentation with them. Members should also keep their primary care provider informed of the COVID-19 vaccines they get.
- Members should not receive any bills for COVID-19 vaccines from their vaccination provider or UnitedHealthcare during the national public health emergency period. If a member receives a bill, they should call the number on their UnitedHealthcare card and we can help them determine what to do.

We will help keep you informed on the groups of people prioritized by the CDC to get the COVID-19 vaccine and where to find vaccination providers. Continue to check this page for the latest information.

### What do we know about the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine? **New 12/21**

FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines will help protect people from getting COVID-19. In fact, each vaccine reported strong protection from the disease:

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** According to the FDA, this two-dose COVID-19 vaccine was [~95% effective](#) at preventing COVID-19 in people age 16 and older, based on the Pfizer-BioNTech Phase 3 trial. There are FDA Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine fact sheets for both [health care providers](#) and [patients and caregivers](#).
- **Moderna:** According to the FDA, this two-dose COVID-19 vaccine was [~94% effective](#) at preventing COVID-19 in people age 18 and older, based on the Moderna Phase 3 trial. There are FDA Moderna COVID-19 vaccines fact sheets for both [health care providers](#) and [patients and caregivers](#).

Follow the vaccination instructions from the manufacturer. The efficacy is the level the vaccine prevents COVID-19. The FDA requires more than 50% efficacy for authorization.

Important reminders on the protection COVID-19 vaccines provide:

- Vaccines can take several weeks after the second dose to get protection.
- COVID-19 vaccines will help protect people from getting COVID-19, but they should follow CDC and state health guidelines to stop the spread of the disease.
- The duration of protection against COVID-19 is currently unknown.

Because of this, continue to follow public health safety guidelines to help protect yourself and others. Wear face masks, practice physical distancing and wash hands regularly.

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### **What other COVID-19 vaccines are in process? Update 12/12**

There are several COVID-19 vaccines in late stage clinical development in the U.S. and globally. For the latest information, visit the [FDA website](#).

### **What is the process for FDA-authorized vaccines? New 11/25**

The [FDA](#) has a review process that it completes before it will authorize vaccines for emergency use by the general public. Once the FDA authorizes a COVID-19 vaccine, the [Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) will meet to vote on recommending the vaccine. If recommended, the CDC Director will review and approve who should receive the vaccine. The CDC has information on the process [here](#).

### **Will the COVID-19 vaccine provide protection from COVID-19? New 12/12**

The FDA's COVID-19 fact sheets are the best source for protection, safety and side effect information. Follow the vaccination instructions from the manufacturer. The [COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer-BioNTech](#) will require 2 doses, given 3 weeks apart. The [COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna](#) will require 2 doses, administered 4 weeks apart. We strongly encourage members to schedule both doses at the same time to meet these time frames and get protection from COVID-19.

The duration of protection against COVID-19 is currently unknown.

It will be important to continue to follow public health safety guidelines: wear face masks, practice physical distancing and wash hands regularly.

### **What else can people do to stay safe during this time? New 11/25**

It is important to continue to work together to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to practice proper hygiene and protective measures and follow state agency guidance. Members can take the following steps to stay safe:

- Get a flu shot to help protect themselves and their family from the flu.
- Make sure shots and doctor visits are up to date.
- Practice proper hand washing throughout the day, especially after being in a public place, or if you have sneezed or coughed.
- Keep avoiding close contact with physical distancing efforts.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces daily. Remember this includes tables, doorknobs and faucets.
- Cover mouth and nose with a cloth mask when around others.
- Learn more about protection from COVID-19 on the [CDC website](#).

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### **Are COVID-19 vaccines safe? Update 12/21**

The U.S. [vaccine safety system](#) ensures that all vaccines, including the recently FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines, are as safe as possible. Even after emergency use authorization, the FDA continues to review clinical data about the vaccines.

### **What should I do if I have a side effect from the COVID-19 vaccine? New 12/19**

According to the CDC, the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines report some [side effects](#). The side effects may feel like flu and might even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

In the event of an emergency, you should call 911 or go to the nearest hospital.

If you have side effects, you should report them to your vaccination provider or primary care provider. You should also notify the CDC at 1-800-822-7967 or use the CDC's mobile app, [v-safe](#), which helps you monitor side effects and sends second dose reminders.

### **Are there people who should not get COVID-19 vaccines? New 12/21**

People with certain conditions or of different ages are not yet recommended to get FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines. If you have questions about getting FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines, talk to your health care provider.

According to the [CDC](#), if a person has ever had a severe allergic reaction to a vaccine or an injected medicine, they should ask their doctor if they should get the COVID-19 vaccine. A severe reaction is one that requires treatment at a hospital or with medications like an EpiPen (epinephrine).

The CDC recommends the people who have seasonal allergies or allergies to food, pets or oral medications, can still be vaccinated. If you have any questions, you should check with your health care provider.

For more information, you can read the FDA's [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#) and [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#).

### **How will the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine be distributed? Update 12/21**

FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine distribution is being coordinated by the [CDC](#) and [state health departments](#).

Since supplies are limited at this time, health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities will be the first to be vaccinated. As more supply becomes available, the current CDC guidance is that essential workers (e.g., emergency workers, utility workers, teachers) get the vaccine next,

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followed by adults with high-risk medical conditions and people age 65 and older. [State health departments](#) are the member's source for COVID-19 vaccine prioritization and availability in their area.

COVID-19 vaccines may be more available in the spring to mid-year time frame as additional vaccines are FDA-authorized, produced and distributed.

The CDC framework will continue to evolve as the vaccine authorization and distribution process continues.

Phase 1A (current phase)	Phase 1B & 1C	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Health care workers	Essential workers	Critical workers in high-risk settings	Children and young adults	Everyone in the U.S. who has not yet gotten access to the vaccine
Long-term care residents	Adults with high-risk medical conditions	All others at higher risk	All essential workers not in phases 1 & 2	
	Adults 65 and older (starting with 75 and older)	Homeless shelters, group homes, prisons, jails		

### How will people know when to get the COVID-19 vaccination? Update 12/21

Individuals can check with your [state health department](#) on which groups are currently prioritized. Members can speak with their primary care provider or other health care professional about vaccine recommendations given any specific health conditions.

UnitedHealthcare is also committed to helping keep our customers informed of which groups are eligible to receive the vaccine and how to find vaccination providers as information becomes available. The UnitedHealthcare [COVID-19 consumer site](#) and the member's [online UnitedHealthcare account](#) will have the latest information.

Brokers, consultants and customers can also use these FAQs for the latest information.

### Where will COVID-19 vaccines be available? Update 12/19

Initially, COVID-19 vaccines will be available at certain locations. A [state health department](#) is a resource for learning about local availability.

As vaccines become more widely available, members will be able to get the COVID-19 vaccination at participating retail pharmacies, as well as doctor's offices, hospitals and federally qualified health centers.

### Will members have a choice in COVID-19 vaccine? Update 12/21

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Like the flu vaccine, vaccination providers will administer the COVID-19 based on availability. Vaccination providers may not have all FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines at their location. If members have questions, we encourage them to talk to their health care provider.

### **What documentation will be required to get the vaccine? Update 12/21**

Here's what we understand today:

- For people with Medicaid, Employer and Individuals plans, they will need to show their UnitedHealthcare card.
- For people with Medicare plans, they will need to show their Medicare number which is on their red, white, and blue Medicare card.

At the vaccination appointment, health care professionals will likely want to understand the member's health status. Members should be prepared to share current medical conditions and medications. The member's [UnitedHealthcare online account](#) is also a resource where members can find a snapshot of their health status, including medical conditions and medications. As more is known, this information will be updated.

Coming out of their appointment, we encourage members to keep their vaccination reminder and/or vaccination card with them. Members should also be sure the second dose is scheduled when they receive the first dose.

### **Is there a choice in which COVID-19 vaccine a person receives? New 12/21**

Like the flu vaccine, vaccination providers will administer the COVID-19 vaccine based on availability. Vaccination providers may not have all FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines at their location. If you have questions, we encourage you to talk to your health care provider.

### **When should people get the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine? Update 12/19**

Individuals will need to get both doses in the required time frame to have protection from COVID-19. We encourage you to schedule appointments for both doses at the same time. The vaccination provider will also help people know when to get the second dose. The CDC's new mobile app, [v-safe](#), can also help with second dose reminders.

Follow the vaccination instructions from the manufacturer. The [COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer-BioNTech](#) will require 2 doses, given 3 weeks apart. The COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna will require 2 doses, administered 1 month apart. We strongly encourage members to schedule both doses at the same time to meet these time frames and get protection from COVID-19. The

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vaccination provider should assist you with scheduling the second dose when you receive your first dose.

### **Will UnitedHealthcare cover the COVID-19 vaccine, and how will they cover the vaccine? Update 1/8/21**

Yes. Members will have \$0 cost-share (copayment, coinsurance or deductible) for FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines, as outlined below, including when two doses are required:

- For Employer and Individual health plans\*, members have \$0 cost-share at both in- and out-of-network providers through the national public health emergency period, currently scheduled to end April 20, 2021. This applies to fully insured and self-funded commercial health plans.
- For Medicare plans, members have \$0 cost-share on vaccines at both in- and out-of-network providers through 2021.
- For Medicaid individuals in UnitedHealthcare Community Plans, state variations and regulations may apply during this time. Please review the [UnitedHealthcare Community Plan website](#) and your state's site for the latest information. If no state-specific guidance is available, UnitedHealthcare plan guidelines will apply.

\* *Excludes Short Term Limited Duration (STLD) plans*

### **What is the process for approving FDA-authorized vaccines and then how do members know if they are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine and where can they get a vaccine? Update 12/13**

As a COVID-19 vaccine is FDA [authorized for emergency use](#), the [Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) meets to recommend it, and if recommended the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) Director will review and approve who should get the vaccine first.

It is likely the vaccine will first be made available to health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities, then essential workers and people at high risk, such as those over 65 years old or with certain medical conditions.

At first, we expect the vaccine to be at limited health care sites because of storage needs and availability.

Members who are selected to be in the first groups to get a COVID-19 vaccine can go their [state health department](#) to find vaccine providers. Members can also speak to their primary care provider or other health care professional to better understand what they should do given their specific health conditions.

COVID-19 vaccines may be more available in the spring to mid-year time frame as additional vaccines are FDA-authorized, produced and distributed. The goal will be for people to get the COVID-19 vaccine easily and conveniently as recommended by their health care provider. We will keep [uhc.com](#) updated as more information on locations becomes available.

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### **What do we know about the COVID-19 vaccines in development? Update 12/19**

The COVID-19 vaccine situation is changing quickly. The first two vaccines have been emergency use authorized. Several other COVID-19 vaccines are in late stage trials. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine requires two doses 3 weeks apart and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine requires a second dose 4 weeks after the first dose. Members will need to plan to make sure they get both doses at the right time.

Current vaccine information can be found at the [FDA emergency preparedness and response site for COVID-19](#).

Additional vaccine information can be found at:

[CDC COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[CDC COVID-19 vaccine safety site](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Things You Need to Know](#)

### **Which COVID-19 vaccine will be recommended for members? New 11/25**

Upon authorization, a member's primary care provider or other health care professional can help a member understand which COVID-19 vaccine might be right for them.

The [CDC website](#) continues to be the best resource for COVID-19 information. Visit [uhc.com](#) for COVID-19 resources available through your health plan.

## **COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT**

### **How are COVID-19 vaccines covered? Update 12/10**

The COVID-19 vaccine serum will initially be paid by the government.

For **Employer and Individual health plans\***, UnitedHealthcare and self-funded customers will cover the administration of COVID-19 vaccines with no cost share for in-and out-of-network providers, during the national public health emergency period. Administration fees for in-network providers will be based on contracted rates. Administration fees for out-of-network providers will be based on CMS published rates.

\* *Excludes Short Term Limited Duration (STLD) plans*

**For Medicare Advantage health plans**, charges for COVID-19 vaccine administration should be billed to the CMS Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC). The MAC will reimburse claims for

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Medicare members with no cost share for the remainder of 2020 and through 2021. For more information, visit the CMS [COVID-19 Insurers Toolkit](#).

**For Medicaid**, Medicaid state-specific rules and other state regulations may apply. For Medicaid and other state-specific regulations, please refer to your state-specific website or your [state's UnitedHealthcare Community Plan website](#), if applicable. UnitedHealthcare will pay administration fees at CMS published rates unless otherwise specified.

#### **How will vaccines be adjudicated if administered during an office visit? New 12/10**

UnitedHealthcare will reimburse for office visits along with the vaccine and administration when the primary purpose of the visit is the delivery of the COVID-19 immunization. We will adjudicate claims according to a member's benefit plan for preventive care.

#### **What is the current CMS published rate for administering the vaccine? Update 12/12**

CMS published rates for administration of the vaccine: For single dose, \$28.39. For 2 doses, \$16.94 for initial dose and \$28.39 for second dose.)

For COVID-19 vaccine administration billing and reimbursement information, go to the [uhcprovider.com](#).

## **VACCINE CLAIM, BILLING AND CODING**

#### **How will participating providers and pharmacist bill vaccine administration? New 12/10**

Participating providers may bill the UnitedHealthcare medical benefit through our [standard claims process](#). Pharmacist should submit to their claims pharmacy platform. Rates will be paid at the CMS defined reimbursement levels. State Medicaid may provide different guidance.

If an out-of-network provider bills above the CMS published rates for the administration of the vaccine, the member will not be held liable for payment of the administration service. Per federal provisions, a health care provider may not balance bill or impose cost share on a member for the cost of a vaccine or the administration. This applies for both in- and out-of-network providers.

#### **When will UnitedHealthcare begin paying COVID-19 vaccine administrative claims? New 12/10**

UnitedHealthcare will begin paying COVID-19 vaccine administration claims once CMS rates are published.

#### **What is the member and plan sponsor cost share? New 12/10**

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The COVID-19 vaccine serum will initially be paid by the government. Eligible members receiving the vaccine will not have any out-of-pocket costs.

For Employer and Individual\* health plans, UnitedHealthcare and self-funded customers will be required to cover the administration of COVID-19 vaccines with no cost share for in- and out-of-network providers, during the national public health emergency period. Administration fees for in-network providers will be based on contracted rates. Administration fees for out-of-network providers will be based on CMS published rates.

\*Does not apply to short term duration health plans

### What is UnitedHealthcare approach for medical claims? Update 12/29

UnitedHealthcare aligns with America Medical Association (AMA) CPT coding for medical claims. Health care professionals should use published AMA CPT codes when submitting COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration claims to UnitedHealthcare under the medical benefit.

#### Currently approved [AMA CPT Codes](#):

Manufacturer	Vaccine Dose CPT	National Drug Code	1 <sup>st</sup> Administration CPT	2 <sup>nd</sup> Administration CPT
Pfizer	91300	59267-1000-1	0001A	0002A
Moderna	91301	80777-273-10	0011A	0012A
AstraZeneca*	91302	00310-1222-10	0021A	0022A

- Not yet approved or available

Additional codes will be added as they become available.

Codes will be added to all applicable provider fee schedules as part of the standard quarterly code update and any negotiated discounts and premiums will apply to these codes. Codes will be added using the CMS published effective date for the codes and payment allowance as the primary fees source.

#### Modifiers

Modifiers are not required when submitting administration COVID-19 vaccine or vaccine claims through medical.

### What is UnitedHealthcare approach for pharmacy claims and administrative costs? New 12/10

Pharmacies will be allowed to bill UnitedHealthcare directly for the costs associated with the administration of COVID-19 vaccines. Pharmacists administering the COVID-19 vaccine serum provided by the federal government should submit claims through their pharmacy claims platform.

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Claims for Medicare Advantage members should be billed to the applicable CMS [Medicare Administrative Contractor \(MAC\)](#).

National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) has designated two submission clarification codes (SCC) for pharmacy billing as the differentiating value for the dose currently being administered. OptumRx® is updating its claims system to allow different reimbursement rates based on the submitted SCC and professional service code value from the pharmacy:

SCC/PSC Value	Description
SCC 2	Indicates initial dose
SCC 6	Indicates that the previous medication was a starter dose and additional medication is needed to continue treatment
“MA” (Medication Administered)	Indicates that pharmacies can submit claims with a DUR PPS code = MA to trigger an administration fee

Additional information on billing pharmacy claims can be found in the [NCPDP Emergency Preparedness Guidance –COVID-19 Vaccines guide](#).

**Where can I go for more information? Updated 12/21**

[8 things to know about COVID-19 vaccines](#) from the CDC

[Authorized COVID-19 vaccines](#) from the FDA

[COVID-19 vaccine myths debunked](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[FDA COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[UnitedHealthcare COVID-19 Member Resource Center](#)

#### **Provider Resources**

[CMS Enrollment for Administering COVID-19 Vaccine Shots](#)

[CMS Medicare Billing for COVID-19 Vaccine Shot Administration](#)

[CMS Coding for COVID-19 Vaccine Shots](#)

[CMS COVID-19 Vaccine Shot Payment](#)

[Roster Billing Guidance](#)

[UnitedHealthcare COVID-19 Billing Guide](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Member Center](#)

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