DISABILITY NGOs ALLIANCE (DNA)

PROJECT COVID-19 VACCINE FOR PWDs, CARERS AND NGO STAFF

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSEWERS

1. **How do I get a vaccine?**
   There are several places you can look for a vaccination provider- BBMP, Voluntary Organisations & Private Hospitals. You can visit **Vaccines.gov** or check your state health department or local pharmacy's website. Visit How Do I Get a COVID-19 Vaccine to learn more.

2. **Can I choose which vaccination to take?**

   Yes. All currently authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and CDC does not recommend one vaccine over another. The most important decision is to get a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible. Widespread vaccination is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic. Covaxin and Covishield are available in India and widely using these two. There are other COVID-19 vaccine options available for which this risk has not been seen (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna), Sputnic V and Johnson & Johnson.

3. **How long does protection from a Covid-19 vaccine last?**

   We don't know how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and death for a lot of people. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice. Experts are working to learn more about both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity. CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

4. **Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have taken 2 doses of the vaccine?**

   It depends. For now, fully vaccinated people can gather indoors without physical distancing or wearing masks with other people who are fully vaccinated. Until more is known, fully vaccinated people should continue to wear masks and stay 6 feet apart from other people in other settings, like when they are in public or visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households.

5. **If I have already had Covid-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a Covid-19 vaccine?**

   Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That's because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again.

If you were treated for COVID-19 with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

6. **How many doses of vaccine will I need to take?**

The number of doses needed depends on which vaccine you receive. To get the most protection:

- Two shots of Covaxin vaccine doses should be given 4 weeks apart.
- Two shots of Covishield vaccine doses should be given 4-6 weeks apart.
- Sputnic lite and Johnson & Johnsons Jansen (J&J/Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine requires only one dose.

If you receive a vaccine that requires two doses, you should get your second shot as close to the recommended interval as possible. However, your second dose may be given up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose, if necessary.. You should not get the second dose earlier than the recommended interval.

7. **If I have an underlying condition, can I take a Covid-19 vaccine?**

People with underlying medical conditions can receive a COVID-19 vaccine as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Vaccination is an important consideration for adults of any age with **certain underlying medical conditions** because they are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Please consult your doctor and take their opinion/ advice on this.

8. **Can I get vaccinated against Covid-19 while I am currently sick with Covid -19?**

No. People with COVID-19 who have symptoms should wait to be vaccinated until they have recovered from their illness and have met the criteria for discontinuing isolation; those without symptoms should also wait until they meet the criteria before getting vaccinated. This guidance also applies to people who get COVID-19 before getting their second dose of vaccine.

9. **If I am a pregnant, can I take a Covid -19 vaccine?**

Yes, if you are pregnant, you can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. You might want to have a conversation with your doctor to help you decide whether to get vaccinated. While such a conversation might be helpful.

10. **What are the most common side effects after getting a Covid-19 vaccine?**

After getting vaccinated, you might have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. Common side effects are pain, redness, and swelling in the arm where you received the shot, as well as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea throughout the rest of the body. These side effects could affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

11. Do you know if you have to test negative first before getting the vaccine?

You do not need to have a negative test result before getting the vaccine.

12. Can all the caregivers/parents and their disable child get vaccinated at the same time?

Yes. All caregivers / parents and eligible person with disability may be vaccinated at the same time. Most people have mild to moderate reactions to the vaccine.

13. What if I can't get my second shot by the identified date?

Connect with your doctor or nearly health care professional and still do try to get the second vaccine. You do not need to restart the vaccination schedule.

14. My daughter / son has autism with moderate intellectual developmental disability. Where people like my daughter can get the vaccine?

Your daughter or son has any disability are eligible who are 18 years and above. If your child has any other health issues, please consult your family doctor once and get their advice. But suggestion is ensure the vaccination to all the eligible person with disability.

15. Is it possible to combine two different vaccines?

It is an advice that take the same vaccination which you have taken in the first dose. However If you take the two different vaccine, the efficacy of the vaccination is not up to the mark.

16.   What medications should be avoided before taking the Covid-19 vaccine and for how long?

The Health Ministry says there are no such instructions: One can take one's regular medication uninterruptedly. Just inform the vaccinator about the medicines you consume.

17. If I suffer from hypertension, Diabetic Mellitus, Chronic Kidney Disease, heart disease or lipid disorders, can I safely take this vaccine?

Overall, the vaccine is safe and efficacious in adults with comorbidity, the Health Ministry has said, adding that the maximum benefit of getting the Covid vaccine 'is for those who have such comorbidities". "However, if you are concerned for any specific reason, please consult your doctor," it has recommended.

18. Where can I get the vaccine from?

Vaccines are available from Government and Private Health Facilities as notified, known as COVID Vaccination Centres (CVCs).

19. What documents are required of registration of eligible beneficiary?

Any of the below mentioned ID with Photo may be produced at the time of registration:

- Aadhaar Card
- Driving License
- Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) Job Card
- Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs
- PAN Card
- Passbooks issued by Bank/Post Office
- Passport
- Pension Document
- Service Identity Card issued to employees by Central/ State Govt./ Public Limited Companies
- Voter ID
- People with comorbidities will have to carry the certificate of comorbidities, in the format shared here by a registered medical practitioner.

20.   Which Covid-19 vaccines are licensed in India?

Two vaccines that have been granted emergency use authorization by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) in India are Covishield® (AstraZeneca's vaccine manufactured by Serum Institute of India) and Covaxin® (manufactured by Bharat Biotech Limited).

21.   Is it mandatory to take the vaccine?

 Vaccination for COVID-19 is voluntary. However, it is advisable to receive the complete schedule of COVID-19 vaccine for protecting oneself against this disease and also to limit the spread of this disease to the close contacts including family members, friends, relatives and co-workers.

22.   How will I know if I am eligible for vaccination?

 In the initial phase, COVID-19 vaccine will be provided to the priority group - Health Care and Front-line workers. The second phase vaccinations, starting May 1, 2021 will allow for all Indians above the age of 18 year and above and 59 with comorbidities to be vaccinated. Registrations will be allowed on the Co-WIN 2.0 Portal, Aarogya Setu app etc. The comorbidities that make a person eligible for vaccinations are listed below:

1. Heart Failure with hospital admission in past one year
2. Post Cardiac Transplant/Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD)
3. Significant Left ventricular systolic dysfunction (LVEF <40%)
4. Moderate or Severe Valvular Heart Disease
5. Congenital heart disease with severe PAH or Idiopathic PAH
6. Coronary Artery Disease with past CABG/PTCA/MI AND Hypertension/Diabetes on treatment
7. Angina AND Hypertension/Diabetes on treatment
8. CT/MRI documented stroke AND Hypertension/Diabetes on treatment
9. Pulmonary Artery Hypertension AND Hypertension/Diabetes on treatment

10. Diabetes (> 10 years OR with complications) AND Hypertension on treatment
11. Kidney/ Liver/ Hematopoietic stem cell transplant: Recipient/On wait-list
12. End Stage Kidney Disease on haemodialysis/ CAPD
13. Current prolonged use of oral corticosteroids/ immunosuppressant medications
14. Decompensated cirrhosis
15. Severe respiratory disease with hospitalizations in last two years/FEV1 <50%
16. Lymphoma/ Leukaemia/ Myeloma
17. Diagnosis of any solid cancer on or after 1st July 2020 OR currently on any cancer therapy
18. Sickle Cell Disease/ Bone marrow failure/ Aplastic Anemia/ Thalassemia Major
19. Primary Immunodeficiency Diseases/ HIV infection
20. **Persons with disabilities due to Intellectual disabilities/ Muscular Dystrophy/ Acid attack with involvement of respiratory system/ Persons with disabilities having high support needs/ Multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness.**

21. **What is the efficacy of a vaccine?**

Vaccine efficacy is the degree to which a vaccine provides protection, controls transmission and reduces the incidence of a disease in controlled conditions. The smallpox vaccine with 95 per cent efficacy has eradicated the disease. The oral polio vaccine with an efficacy of 98 per cent has almost eliminated polio from the world. The COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved so far offer greater than 70 per cent efficacy.

22. **Why should I take the vaccine if I have been fine so far?**

Well, not just for your own sake, but also for that of your family, especially the elders. Besides, you help humanity, too, by contributing to our cumulative immunity against the virus.

23. **Should those with comorbid conditions such as heart diseases, diabetes, lung diseases get vaccinated?**
Yes. Individuals with comorbid diseases are a high-risk group and they should get vaccinated.

24. **How safe is the vaccine for children?**

We don't know. All the clinical trials thus far have been on adults, but some trials are now being carried out on children. Pfizer started trials in October 2020, limiting the testing to ages 12 and older. Moderna has indicated it will begin testing in children ages 12 through 17. During this process, medical professionals will examine the dosages, interval between doses, and the number of doses that work best in children. The process could take many months and children may have to wait till early 2022.

25. **When does the immunity take effect?**
About 4-6 weeks after the first dose and 10-12 days after the second.

26. **If I'm breastfeeding, is it advisable to take the vaccine?**
The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices states breastfeeding women may take the vaccine. It is not known if the vaccines are passed through breast milk. Live viral vaccines are routinely given to lactating women.