



# Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at JP Griffin Group



## COVID-19 VACCINE GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH ALLERGIES

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides [information](#) to help people with allergies decide whether they should get the COVID-19 vaccine, or which vaccine they should receive.

If you have more specific questions about getting vaccinated, talk to your health care provider.

### Types of Allergic Reactions

A **severe allergic reaction** is when a person needs to be treated with epinephrine or must go to the hospital. Experts refer to severe allergic reactions as anaphylaxis.

An **immediate allergic reaction** happens within four hours after getting vaccinated and could include symptoms such as hives, swelling, wheezing or other respiratory distress.

### If You Have Allergies

If you are allergic to an ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your doctor for guidance. Consider the following situations of allergic reactions and recommendations from the CDC:

- **If you've had an allergic reaction to a shot of an mRNA vaccine**—If you had an allergic reaction to the first shot of a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine (e.g., Pfizer and Moderna) and aren't able to get the second shot, ask your doctor if you should get a different type of COVID-19 vaccine.
- **If you're allergic to polyethylene glycol (PEG) or polysorbate**—PEG and polysorbate are closely related to each other. PEG is an ingredient in the mRNA vaccines, and polysorbate is an ingredient in the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. If you're allergic to any of those ingredients, ask your doctor if you can get a specific vaccine.
- **If you're allergic to other types of vaccines**—If you have had an immediate allergic reaction—regardless of severity—to a vaccine or injectable therapy for another disease, ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine. Your doctor will help you decide if it is safe for you to get vaccinated.
- **If you have allergies not related to vaccines**—It's recommended that people get vaccinated even if they have a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injectable medications—such as food, pet, venom, environmental or latex allergies. People with a history of allergies to oral medications or a family history of severe allergic reactions may also get vaccinated.



- **If you get a rash where you got the shot**—The CDC has learned that some people have experienced a red, itchy, swollen or painful rash where they got the shot. These rashes can start a few days to more than a week after the first shot and are sometimes quite large. If the rash is itchy, you can take an antihistamine. If it is painful, you can take a pain medication like acetaminophen. If you experience that rash after getting the first shot, you should still get the second shot at the recommended interval, if the vaccine requires a second shot. Tell your vaccination provider that you experienced a rash after the first shot. They may recommend that you get the second shot in the other arm.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the different types of available COVID-19 vaccines.

### **Additional Information**

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination provider site, seek immediate medical care by calling 911.

Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccines and allergic reactions](#) on the CDC's website.

*Source: CDC*