

COVID-19 Vaccine Community Workshop

Leader Guide

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Table of Contents

What is the purpose of hosting a COVID-19 vaccine workshop?	3
Orientation to Leader Guide	4
Purpose of this guide	4
How these materials were developed	4
How and when to reach us	4
How should I plan for a COVID-19 vaccine workshop?	5
Decide whether your workshop will be virtual or in-person	5
Start preparing (2 weeks or more before the workshop)	6
Continue preparing (1 week before the workshop)	7
Do final preparations (1 day before the workshop)	8
What should I do and say during the COVID-19 vaccine workshop?	9
Sample Script Information	10
Frequently Asked Questions	11
How the COVID-19 vaccine works	11
About vaccines and safety	11
Getting the COVID-19 vaccine	12
Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine if... ?	13

What is the purpose of hosting a COVID-19 vaccine workshop?

A COVID-19 vaccine workshop is an interactive discussion between you and a community group of any size. The workshop should last between 30 and 60 minutes. Using this toolkit, you will share some information with your community members about the COVID-19 vaccine.

The goal is to share information that is:

- **Accurate.** This information was approved by public health experts including doctors. The information in the Community Workbook (*COVID-19 Vaccine: Learn the Facts to Stay Safe and Protect Others*) and this Leader Guide comes from official sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- **Population-specific.** We talked with many people in Arkansas as we developed this material. This included health care workers, public health experts, community leaders, and other residents. We provide this toolkit in 3 languages:
 - English
 - Spanish
 - Marshallese
- **Empowering.** This material should answer many questions community members have about the COVID-19 vaccine. Participants should leave your workshop with new knowledge and prepared to:
 - Make a decision about getting the COVID-19 vaccine; or
 - Have a conversation with their doctor to get more information

Orientation to Leader Guide

Purpose of this guide

The goal of this Leader Guide is to give you all the information and tips you need to host community COVID-19 vaccine workshops. It will explain how you can:

- Invite people to a workshop
- Discuss the vaccine using printed Community Workbooks (*COVID-19 Vaccine: Learn the Facts to Stay Safe and Protect Others*), updated data sheet (*Learn the Risk of Getting Sick with COVID-19*), and a Sample Script
- Answer questions that may not be covered in the Community Workbook

How these materials were developed

Materials for COVID-19 vaccine workshops, including this guide, were first created in January 2021. It has been updated, and will continue to be updated, based on what we continue to learn about COVID-19 and the vaccine. Please visit <https://www.immunizear.org/let-s-talk-about-covid-vaccine> to download the most current version of these materials each time you host a workshop. This will help ensure that you provide the most current information to your community members.

How and when to reach us

We want to hear from you! You are a valuable member of the team working to control COVID-19 in Arkansas.

Please contact us if:

- After reading this material, you still have questions about hosting a COVID-19 vaccine workshop.
- Community participants ask you questions that we should add to the FAQ section of this Leader Guide.
- You have other ideas to improve these materials.

You can contact the Immunize Arkansas staff at: allie@immunizear.org

How should I plan for a COVID-19 vaccine workshop?

Decide whether your workshop will be virtual or in-person

In-person workshop

If your workshop will be in-person, choose a location where you can follow all current public health guidelines. Give participants information to help them follow these guidelines:

- Allow at least 6 feet between people.
- Encourage hand washing and provide supplies.
- Label doors with signs reminding people to wear masks and stay away if they are sick.
- Check with the Arkansas Department of Health to make sure you follow any current directives:
<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/covid-19-health-guidances>.

Virtual workshop

If your workshop will be virtual, choose the platform that works best for your group. If you already have regular virtual meetings with your group, continue with what you normally do. Here are a few virtual platform options and links to tutorials. Be sure to choose one that meets the needs of your workshop. Compare features like time limits, maximum number of participants, and whether they allow you to share your screen if you plan on using the slide presentation.

- [Zoom](#)
- [Google Meets](#)
- [Facebook Live](#)

Start preparing (2 weeks or more before the workshop)

- Finalize a date and time for the workshop.
- Recruit participants.
 - It is best if you can find a group of people who are already planning to meet. Examples are church meetings and community education sessions. This way, you will not need to advertise a lot to get people to the workshop.
 - If you need to advertise:
 - Use this sample wording for your church or organization's social media page and add your event's details:
"You are all invited to a special virtual gathering this Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. We will meet on Zoom for a group discussion about the COVID-19 vaccine. This workshop is for everyone. Come get accurate information and answers to your questions. If you are interested, comment below or message me and I will send you the link."
 - You can also make flyers to post in churches and other places of worship, grocery stores, or other places people may go. Make sure to include these details about your workshop: date, time, location (or virtual platform), and how to contact you to sign up. (Flyer available for download on our website)
- Review all workshop materials.
 - Read through this Leader Guide and Community Workbook.
 - Practice the Sample Script. Review the Learn the Risk of Getting COVID-19 handout.
 - Ask any questions you may have. Try to think about possible questions your participants may have and be prepared to answer as many as you can. Our contact information is at the beginning of this Leader Guide.
- Gather local resources. Type this information ahead of time and be prepared to share it during the workshop. Helpful local resources include:
 - Testimonials from local residents who have gotten the vaccine. This will help make the message relatable to the public.
 - Locations where the participants can get the vaccine. These could include local pharmacies, hospitals, and your Arkansas Department of Health local health unit. For each location, provide the name, address, and phone number.
 - To find a local pharmacy, visit <https://www.arrx.org/>.
 - To find your local health unit, visit <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/local-health-units>.
- Decide how you will share materials with participants before the workshop. This includes the Community Workbooks and your printed local resources page, if you made one. Some options are:
 - Pickup: Designate a central location and time for participants to pick up materials.
 - Mail: Send materials far enough in advance that participants will have them before the workshop.
 - Participant Download: Encourage people to download their own Community Workbooks at <https://www.immunizear.org/let-s-talk-about-covid-vaccine>.
 - Download and Post: Download the Workbook and post it and your local resources page to your social media site or in the chat box within your virtual workshop.

Continue preparing (1 week before the workshop)

- Prepare your virtual space.
 - Get comfortable with the virtual platform you will be using and its settings. Decide how you want to interact with participants during the workshop. For example, do you want them to unmute themselves to ask questions as they come up, or would you rather they send questions to the chat box? Set up practice meetings with friends and family if you would like.
 - These are example settings in Zoom that are often appropriate for group meetings. If you are using another virtual platform, decide which settings to use. In Zoom, go to Settings and scroll through the options:
 - Waiting room: ON. Participants will not be allowed to join before you.
 - All video and audio: ON.
 - Mute all participants when they join a meeting: ON. They can unmute themselves and speak when they need to.
 - Chat ON. You may want to turn private chat OFF.
 - Sound notification when someone joins or leaves: OFF.
 - Disable desktop/screen share for users: ON. It should not be necessary for participants to share their screens with the group.
 - Non-verbal feedback and meeting reactions: ON. Participants can use these to communicate with you during the workshop without interrupting.
 - Recruit a volunteer to serve as tech support during your workshop. It is difficult to lead the group and deal with technical problems that may come up.

- Prepare participants.
 - Tell or remind them how to access workshop materials.
 - Offer to set up a “tech-check” to make sure their workshop link, microphone, camera, and other features are working correctly. Do this far enough in advance so they have a few days to troubleshoot if needed.

- Gather these supplies if you are having an in-person workshop.
 - Extra copies of materials
 - Physical distance and mask reminder signs
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Tape or other material to mark appropriate distance between seats
 - Pens or pencils (one for each participant)

Do final preparations (1 day before the workshop)

- Review all materials one last time (Leader Guide, Community Booklet, Sample Script, Learn the Risk of Getting COVID-19 handout, and FAQ's).
- Practice using your virtual platform to make sure your microphone and camera are working well. Even if you did this earlier, keep in mind that new versions of software do come out and you may need to update yours.
- Remind your participants about the workshop. Be sure to provide the link to the virtual event and instructions for accessing materials.

What should I do and say during the COVID-19 vaccine workshop?

Use the Sample Script.

Please see the attachment for the Leader Sample Script.

The purpose of the Sample Script is to provide the facilitator guidance during a COVID-19 Vaccine Workshop. It is meant to be used by the facilitator while the participants have copies of the COVID-19 Vaccine Workbook in front of them.

Words in black ink are the same as the words in the Workbook.

Words in blue ink have been added for the facilitator to say verbally during the discussion.

[Words in italics should not be said out loud.]

If you are printing the Sample Script, it is recommended for you to print front and back, so your Sample Script is in the same layout as the Workbook. Images from the Workbook are not included in the Sample Script.

Review the “Learn the Risk of Getting Sick with COVID-19” handout.

Before presenting a COVID-19 Vaccine Workshop, please make sure to review and/or print the “Learn the Risk of getting sick with COVID-19” handout. This handout was created to keep critical data in the Workbook up-to-date.

You MUST use this handout.

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: 4/26/22

The Workbook has a lot of information, but it may not address every question that your learners have during the workshop. Below is a list of frequently asked questions about COVID-19 and the vaccine that you may be asked.

How the COVID-19 vaccines work

Once I get the vaccine, how long does it take for me to be fully protected from COVID-19?

It takes about 2 weeks after you complete your initial series of the vaccine to be considered “fully protected”.

The number of vaccines in your “initial series” depends on which vaccine you received and whether or not you are considered moderately to severely immunocompromised. Ask your doctor or the person who gave you the vaccine. And remember, the vaccines authorized so far show that they can protect most people from severe disease and hospitalizations.

How long will the vaccine protect me from COVID-19?

This is something we are continuing to learn more about. We do not know exactly how long the protection from the vaccine lasts. However, we have learned that the protection from the vaccine does go down several months after receiving your first dose(s) of the vaccine. This is why booster doses are now recommended. In some people, like people who are older than 50 years or are immunocompromised, the protection may not last as long. This is why additional boosters are recommended for certain people.

What are mRNA vaccines?

mRNA vaccines trigger your immune system a little differently than other vaccines. Most other vaccines put a weak or inactive germ into our bodies. Not mRNA vaccines. Instead, mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein, or even just a piece of a protein, that triggers our immune system to respond. That immune response, which makes antibodies, is what protects us from getting sick from the real virus.

Do COVID-19 vaccines actually work?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccines lower your risk of:

- Getting sick with COVID-19
- Severe COVID-19 symptoms
- Hospital stays for COVID-19
- Death from COVID-19

About vaccines and safety

What is in the vaccine?

Specific vaccine ingredients depend on which vaccine you get. You can ask your doctor about the different ingredients in each vaccine. They can give you a fact sheet that lists these.

None of the currently approved vaccines in the U.S. contain ANY of the following ingredients:

- Eggs
- Gelatin
- Latex
- Preservatives
- Metals (such as mercury or aluminum)
- Fetal cells

Why do the mRNA vaccines have to be stored in such cold temperatures?

mRNA vaccines are fragile and can easily fall apart. Keeping them frozen helps protect them from breaking down. If they break down, the vaccine will not work.

I keep hearing people talk about “adverse event reporting” or say that CDC and FDA will keep doing safety studies. Does this mean they are not sure about the safety yet?

The CDC and FDA collect information about adverse events and safety for all vaccines. This is because even though the clinical trials included tens of thousands of people, there could be rare side effects that are not known until a vaccine has been given to more people. This is similar to other vaccines. The FDA has said this vaccine is safe, that it works, and that it is time for people in communities to get it.

Some vaccines have 2 doses. What if I do not get my 2nd dose?

If you get a vaccine that has 2 doses but only get 1, then you will not be as protected from COVID-19.

If I get a vaccine that is 2 doses, when should I get the second dose? What if I cannot get it in that timeframe?

Timing for your second dose depends on which vaccine you get. You will likely need to get the second dose 3 to 4 weeks after your first dose. If you miss the second dose, you should get it as soon as you can. You will not need to start over.

If I get Pfizer vaccine first, can I get Moderna vaccine for the second dose and vice versa?

No. If you get a vaccine that requires 2 doses for the primary series, you should get the same vaccine for the first 2 doses. After the first two doses, you may get additional or booster doses of a different vaccine.

Which brand of vaccine is best? What are most people getting?

mRNA vaccines, like Pfizer or Moderna, are now recommended over the Janssen/Johnson&Johnson vaccine. There is no official preference for either Pfizer or Moderna. Both are very similar in the protection they provide.

Getting the COVID-19 vaccine

Why are only certain groups getting the vaccine before others? Who is deciding this order?

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) is making recommendations on which groups should get the COVID-19 vaccine. The ACIP makes recommendations on the use of all vaccines. When supply of vaccines are limited, state health departments lead these decisions at the state level using this CDC guidance and considering what is happening within the state.

What side effects I should expect from the COVID-19 vaccine?

For people who do report side effects, the most common ones are:

- Pain or swelling where they got the vaccine
- Fever
- Feeling tired
- Headache

These normally last 1 to 2 days.

Will COVID-19 vaccines cause long-term effects?

Long-term effects are rare for any vaccine. That includes the COVID-19 vaccine. If you have a reaction to the vaccine, it will likely happen within 6 weeks of getting it. During clinical trials, they monitored participants for more than 6 weeks to make sure there were no harmful long-term effects.

If the vaccine works then why do I need to keep following public health guidelines (such as wearing a mask and social distancing)?

We know that the vaccines work well to prevent you from getting really sick from COVID-19. But remember that COVID-19 spreads very easily and some people may not be able to get the vaccine. We want to protect those people too. Public health officials are encouraging us to keep using all the tools to prevent COVID-19 for now. So, we should keep washing our hands, wearing a mask in public, and avoiding large groups as long as they tell us to.

Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine if...?

I had COVID-19 already. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Clinical trials suggest vaccines are safe and still work, even if you already had COVID-19. But, you cannot get the vaccine if you have symptoms or if you are in isolation or quarantine.

I have a health problem. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

The clinical trials showed that the vaccine is safe and works for people with many different health problems. But there is not enough data for us to know how it may affect you and your health problem. **Talk to your doctor about if the vaccine is safe for you.** If you do decide to get the vaccine, be sure to tell the person who gives it to you about your health problems.

I am pregnant. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. If you are pregnant and get COVID-19, you may be at risk for more severe disease. Studies show that women who are pregnant benefit from being vaccinated against COVID-19. It is also safe for your child. Some studies show that immunity can be passed from the mother to the child, which means it can protect your baby from COVID-19 after he or she is born. **Talk to your doctor about if the vaccine is safe for you.**

I had an allergic reaction to another vaccine. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Talk with your doctor about if the vaccine is safe for you. If you do decide to get the vaccine, be sure to tell the person who gives it to you about your reactions to other vaccines.

I have been exposed to COVID-19 and am in quarantine. Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

You need to wait until your quarantine is over, but you should get the vaccine once you are no longer in quarantine.