

6 Things You Need to Know About MS and the COVID-19 Vaccines



The COVID pandemic continues to create new challenges and questions, but no one has to face MS alone. The National MS Society convened a group of MS experts to develop guidance so that you have the information you need to make the decisions that are right for you. Here's what you should know...

1. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe for people affected by MS.

All three of the current FDA authorized vaccines – The Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson and Johnson vaccine – are safe for people with MS and to use with disease modifying therapies (DMTs). The Society does not recommend one vaccine over another.

2. The [National MS Society's recommendations](#) are fact based.

Guidance is based on data from clinical trials and studies of other vaccines administered to people living with MS. While data specifically regarding people living with MS and the COVID-19 vaccine is not yet available, we continue to monitor studies and will update our guidance as more is learned. [See the full list](#) of MS experts who participated in the vaccine advisory work.

3. The vaccines are not likely to trigger an MS relapse or have any impact on long-term disease progression.

Any vaccine can cause side effects, including a fever, which can make your MS symptoms worse temporarily. However, your symptoms should subside once your fever is gone.

4. The vaccines do not contain live virus and will not cause COVID-19.

5. It's safe to take MS medication and get the COVID-19 vaccine.

Based on previous data on vaccines and DMTs, we believe it is safe to get this vaccine while on MS medications. However, some may make the vaccine less effective, and it may be best to coordinate the timing of getting the vaccine to get the best results.

[Read the Society's full guidance](#) on how to best time your DMT with the COVID-19 vaccine.

6. Even after getting the COVID-19 vaccine, you should still follow guidelines to slow the spread of the virus.

Data shows that wearing a face mask, social distancing and washing your hands are the best ways to slow the spread of the virus and should be continued even if you get a COVID-19 vaccine.

We will get through this together. Together, we are stronger.

Editor's Note:

- Read the Society's [full COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#).
- Check out our [Ask an MS Expert](#) series to learn more about vaccine recommendations, and how COVID-19 affects people living with MS and minority populations.
- Visit our [Coronavirus Resources Page](#) or contact an [MS Navigator](#) to connect to resources.