

# Answering 12 COVID-19 Questions: Part 3



**No one has to face MS alone. The National MS Society is here to be your supportive partner and continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic to provide everyone affected by MS the information you need to live your best life.**

The National MS Society convened a group of MS experts to develop recommendations regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and those living with MS. We're answering your top questions.

## **Vaccine Recommendations**

### **How were vaccine recommendations developed for the MS community?**

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 update our guidance and monitor studies as more information becomes available.

### **Who developed the vaccine recommendations?**

The National MS Society brought together a diverse group of MS experts and organizations across North America. The recommendations are endorsed by the Consortium of MS Centers, the MS Coalition and other MS organizations.

### **Which vaccine is recommended for those living with MS?**

Both of the current FDA authorized vaccines – The Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna – are safe for people with MS and to use with disease modifying therapies (DMTs).

### **Should I get the vaccine?**

All of us have a personal responsibility to slow the spread of the pandemic and eliminate the virus as quickly as possible. Talk with your MS healthcare team about specific concerns.

## **Effects of COVID-19 Vaccine**

### **Will the vaccine trigger an MS relapse?**

The vaccines are not likely to trigger an MS relapse or to worsen your chronic MS symptoms.

### **Will the vaccine give me COVID-19?**

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

### **What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

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.

## **COVID-19 Vaccine and MS Medications**

### **Is it safe to take my 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 medication.

### **Will my DMT affect the efficacy of the vaccine?**

Most DMTs will not affect the vaccine's efficacy – 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.

[\*\*Visit our webpage for full recommendations\*\*](#) for timing of these DMTs with the COVID-19 vaccine. As well, listen to the RealTalk MS segment below:

[Episode 180: Dr. Jaime Imitola Explains Timing Your MS Medications with Both COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines](#)

### **I take one of those DMTs listed above and cannot adjust when I get my treatment - what do I do about the vaccine?**

Always work with your MS healthcare provider to determine what is best for you in your MS care. Evaluate your risk of COVID-19, including your occupation, where you live and the current state of your MS.

If the risk of your MS worsening outweighs your risk of COVID-19, do not alter your DMT schedule and get the vaccine when it is available to you.

## **Additional Help**

### **Where can I find more information, resources and support?**

The National MS Society is here for you!

- Contact an [MS Navigator](#) for help finding resources
- Check out our [Ask an MS Expert](#) series to learn more about vaccine recommendations, managing stress and more
- Visit our [Coronavirus Resources Page](#) to find the latest information

### **Is there anything else I can do to help slow the spread of the virus besides getting the vaccine?**

Even if you get the COVID-19 vaccine, it is important to maintain many of measures we know will help slow the spread. This includes:

- Wear a mask/facial covering
- Avoid crowds
- Maintain social distancing
- Wash your hands frequently

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

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*Editor's Note: Read [part 1](#) and [part 2](#) of answering your questions about COVID-19.*