UT Health Rio Grande Valley

What to Expect After Getting a Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

The Pfizer or Moderna vaccine you receive will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You might experience some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection against the virus. They should go away in a few days.

Common Side Effects

On the arm you received your injection:
- Pain
- Swelling
- Redness

Throughout the rest of your body:
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle Pain
- Nausea

Tips to Overcome Side Effects

If you experience pain or discomfort after receiving your COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your doctor about taking over-the-counter medicine.

To reduce pain and discomfort at the injection site:
- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area
- Use or exercise your arm

To reduce discomfort from fever:
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Dress lightly

When to Call a Doctor

In most cases, pain and discomfort after receiving your COVID-19 vaccine are normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if:

- Redness or tenderness increases after 24 hours
- Side effects linger after a few days or cause you concern

Important Reminders

- It takes time for your body to build protection after the vaccine; people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving their second dose
- You should get the second dose unless your doctor advises against it

Keep Masking, Distancing, and Washing

After you've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you should keep taking precautions in public places (ie. wearing a mask, social distancing, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, and washing your hands often).

Your Second Dose

After receiving your second Pfizer or Moderna shot, side effects may be more intense than the ones you experienced after your first shot. These side effects are normal and should go away within a few days. If they continue for more than a few days or cause you concern, please contact your doctor.

For more information about the COVID vaccine, please visit **UTHealthRGV.org/CovidVaccine**