

# Become a Pro at Dispensing mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines

You'll face questions about **how to dispense the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna mRNA COVID-19 vaccines...**as vaccination efforts expand.

Encourage patients to get either vaccine series when eligible.

For now, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is for patients 16 years and older...and Moderna is for those 18 and up.

**Can different vaccines be used for each dose?** Only in RARE cases.

Work with your pharmacist to review the patient's vaccine record card or your state's immunization registry so patients get the same product for their first and second dose.

**Is there "wiggle room" on timing of the second dose?** A bit.

Pfizer-BioNTech's second dose is recommended 21 days after the first dose...Moderna's is recommended 28 days after the first dose.

If needed, it's okay to give the second dose up to 4 days early...such as if a patient returns ahead of schedule and might not come back. And if needed, second doses may be scheduled up to 42 days after the first.

**Are there tips to properly prepare doses and avoid errors?** Yes.

Be aware that Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine must be diluted and is 0.3 mL/dose...Moderna's should NOT be diluted and is 0.5 mL/dose.

Use any extra full doses you can draw up...but don't combine excess vaccine from multiple vials.

**Can COVID-19 vaccines be given along with other vaccines?** Not yet.

There are no data on co-administration, and this keeps the picture cleaner for evaluating any adverse events.

Check immunization records so other vaccines (flu, etc) are generally separated by at least 14 days from each COVID-19 vaccine dose.

**Are there requirements for monitoring COVID-19 vaccine safety?** Yes.

For example, help report serious adverse events (anaphylaxis, etc) and errors to VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System).

Also give patients the required fact sheet...and highlight the info about "v-safe." It's CDC's voluntary smartphone tool that uses texts and surveys to check in about side effects after COVID-19 vaccination.

**Can pharmacy technicians administer COVID-19 vaccines?** Yes.

Federal guidance authorizes qualified techs to give COVID-19 vaccines. Talk to your manager about our *Pharmacy Technicians University's PTU Elite: Immunizations* training program. It'll help you meet requirements to give vaccinations...and be confident and prepared.

Get our COVID-19 Vaccines chart and tech tutorial, *The Basics of Immunization and Vaccines*, for help with

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billing, storage, and more.

**Key References:**

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