

COVID Vaccine FAQs

- **How does this vaccine work?**

You may have heard that this vaccine technology involves mRNA. This means that the cells in your body receive a message about how to create a protein that resembles part of the COVID virus. Once your cells create this protein, your immune system mounts a response to recognize and attack this protein. This will allow your immune system to then recognize and attack the COVID virus if you become exposed. This mRNA message has been compared to a snapchat message, because once it is delivered it disappears entirely from your body.

- **What are the side effects of this vaccine?**

Like any vaccine you may experience arm soreness, headache, fatigue, or fever in the days following injection. If they occur, these symptoms respond to over the counter medications and resolve on their own within 2-3 days. Rarely allergic reactions may occur - these are thought to be more likely in people who have a history of severe allergic reactions.

- **Can you get COVID infection from this vaccine?**

No. However, because the vaccine takes several weeks to become fully effective, you can still contract COVID in the days just prior to or just after vaccination. Therefore it is still important to continue masking and social distancing even once vaccinated.

- **When can my child receive a vaccine?**

There are some vaccines that are currently approved for teenagers 16 years old and up. Studies are ongoing for 12-15 year olds, and hopefully this approval will be forthcoming in the next 3-6 months. Eventually these vaccines will be tested and available for younger children but we don't know yet when that might occur.

- **Is the vaccine safe for pregnant or breast feeding moms?**

Most likely yes. While we do not have a lot of data yet on use of these vaccines in these populations, we have no reason to believe that they would cause any harm. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology has recommended COVID vaccine for lactating and pregnant women. Thousands of pregnant and lactating health care workers have already received this vaccine and we will soon have more data supporting their safety in these groups.

- **Do you recommend this vaccine?**

Yes! All of the providers here at Winghaven Pediatrics have been fortunate enough to receive their first dose of vaccine in the past week.