

# Johnson & Johnson's Vaccine Enters Fight Against COVID-19

---

On February 28, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) unanimously voted to authorize a third coronavirus vaccine for emergency use in the U.S.

The new vaccine, from Johnson & Johnson, has a few differences from its predecessors. First, it only requires a single shot, making the vaccination process easier. It's also doesn't need to be kept frozen or in extremely cold temperatures. In fact, it can be stored for months with simple refrigeration. This makes it much easier for local pharmacies and clinics to distribute.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine also works a little differently than either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. This version uses an older, more traditional approach to fighting viruses, using a harmless, weakened cold virus to deliver the information your body needs to create an effective defense against the coronavirus. This is called a viral vector vaccine. Like the other vaccines, it shows your body how to defend itself—it does not contain the coronavirus nor will it give you COVID-19.

Some concerns have been raised regarding the efficacy of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. It should be noted that it's difficult to compare the new vaccine with the previous two, as variant virus strains were present during the Johnson & Johnson trials but not during the Pfizer and Moderna trials. While some tests globally showed the Johnson & Johnson vaccine as 66% effective against the virus, the numbers in the United States were 72%. But more importantly, it's proven to be 86% effective against severe cases. In fact, none of the patients given the Johnson & Johnson vaccine during its trial ended up being hospitalized or dying.

## **In short, this vaccine will save countless lives.**

Maryland, home to a Johnson & Johnson facility that produces the vaccine, will distribute nearly 50,000 doses the week of March 1, 2021. A total of about 4 million doses will ship that first week, with a stunning 100 million estimated by July. Furthermore, President Biden announced a unique partnership between Johnson & Johnson and rival pharmaceutical company, Merck, to help rapidly increase production of this new vaccine. Under the terms of the agreement, Merck will dedicate one entire facility to making the vaccine and another to packaging and preparing it for shipment.

The speed and volume with which this third vaccine can be brought to the public makes it an incredibly potent weapon against our year-plus battle against COVID-19. But the threat of new variants or a resurgence of cases is very real. All three vaccines are remarkably effective against the virus, even more so against serious illness and death. If given the opportunity, Americans should take whatever vaccine they can as soon as they're able.

According to Dr. Fauci, it's a race between us and the virus. "The longer one waits not getting vaccinated," he said, "the better chance the virus has to get a variant or mutation."

### Sources:

[WBAL](#)

[The Conversation.com](#)

[Localdvm.com](#)

[The Washington Post](#)