



# THE OUTER BANKS HOSPITAL Health Coach

Allow The Outer Banks Hospital to be your personal health coach.

## The Benefit of Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine

Today, we enjoy a life expectancy almost double that of what our ancestors enjoyed just one century ago. Interestingly, the development of vaccines against infectious disease is actually responsible for much of this gain in life expectancy.

Over the past year, COVID-19 has sickened and killed millions of people worldwide. And now that COVID-19 vaccines are becoming available in the U.S., there is understandably some concern about receiving them. But according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), safety is a top priority, and routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use.

Currently, two vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) have been authorized in the U.S. by the Food and Drug Administration and recommended by the CDC.

Both have been tested in clinical trials to determine that they are highly effective in stimulating our body's ability to develop immunity and protect us from the disease. For that reason,

they are a critical tool in stopping the pandemic, resuming normal life, and protecting ourselves from this disease.

Both of these vaccines require two doses. The first shot starts building protection. The second shot a few weeks later is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer.

People who have taken COVID-19 vaccines report that side effects including pain, chills, swelling, fatigue, fever, and headache are usually mild and go away after several days. These mild side effects are a normal sign that the body is building protection.

In addition to protecting ourselves, it's paramount to encourage our loved ones who are more vulnerable to consult with their healthcare provider about getting the vaccine.

"I can't think of anything that's more important than the ability to have a head start within our bodies to prevent severe illness," said Daniel Dwyer, MD, chief of staff at The Outer Banks Hospital and lead provider at Outer Banks Women's Care. "I am advocating



*Dr. Daniel Dwyer, frontline healthcare worker and chief of staff at The Outer Banks Hospital is administered the very first COVID-19 vaccine in Dare County by occupational health nurse Julie Tillett, RN.*

this for myself—as I've already taken it—my staff, all the people who work with me, my family, and my friends because I live in the world where I see the effect on the severely ill, and if we can prevent that, we should do everything in our power to make that happen."

As we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions, it is critical to continue using all the tools available to help stop the pandemic. This includes covering the nose and mouth with a mask, maintaining social distancing, and washing hands often.

### Know Before You Go

#### COVID-19 Testing

For those traveling or gathering with family and friends, knowing whether you are carrying the COVID-19 virus is vitally important.

**For more information,  
call (252) 449-6175.**



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The Outer Banks Testing Center is affiliated with The Outer Banks Hospital.

### Facts About COVID-19 Vaccines

Now that the COVID-19 vaccines are authorized and recommended, it's important to understand the facts so that you can make informed decisions for yourself and your family. Make sure to consult with your healthcare provider if you have concerns about the vaccines.

**1. Can the COVID-19 vaccines give me COVID-19?**

No, none of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development or in use in the U.S. contain the live virus that causes COVID-19.

**2. Do the vaccines stop transmission between people?**

It is unclear whether vaccines prevent transmission. The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna clinical trials didn't track cases of asymptomatic infections with COVID-19, which means that the ability of the vaccine to decrease transmission was never evaluated.

**3. Can I still get the coronavirus even though I get the vaccine?**

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

**4. When will I be able to get the vaccine?**

While there is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, the supply will increase in the weeks and months to come. The goal is for everyone to be able to easily get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as quantities are available and to have it administered through doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers.

