



A DOSE OF TRUTH: COVID-19 VACCINE MYTHS



WHAT ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS NEED TO KNOW

As doses of the [COVID-19 vaccine](#) become more available, they bring the promise of global relief from the pandemic. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of misinformation surrounding the vaccine and its development.

Here are some myths and correlating facts about the vaccine:

MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccine is unsafe because it was developed so quickly.

FACT: Although it was developed in record time, the vaccine has gone through FDA's rigorous process to meet all safety standards. No steps were skipped or shortcuts were taken, and the vaccine is proven safe and effective.

MYTH: I have already had COVID-19, so I do not need the vaccine.

FACT: If you have already had COVID-19, you should still get the vaccine; you may just need to delay it. Current evidence suggests that immunity following a COVID-19 infection lasts at least 90 days. For that reason, the CDC suggests you delay getting vaccinated until this period of natural immunity has ended.

MYTH: I do not need to wear a mask or social distance after I receive the vaccine.

FACT: Experts caution that until scientists can definitively say that the vaccine also prevents you from spreading COVID-19 to others, you still need to mask up, keep your distance from others, wash your hands often and use other smart prevention strategies. We must continue all of our present safety measures to decrease the spread until we have reached a level of immunity within the community where the virus has no place to go.

MYTH: The vaccine does not protect against the newer super spreader strains of the virus.

FACT: Research has shown that the proteins in the new strains are 99.99 percent the same as the original version, which means there is a strong chance the vaccine will also work against them. Current evidence states that the vaccine protects against the new strains.

MYTH: I do not need to get the vaccine because advances in medical care — such as plasma therapy and other treatments — have progressed, and COVID-19 can easily be treated.

FACT: Although medical experts have learned more about COVID-19 and advancements in treatments have occurred, you still need to get the vaccine, which is the surest way to prevent contracting the virus. The benefits of new therapies have been modest, so the vaccine is by far the best strategy.





MYTH: Since the vaccines are now available, the pandemic will be over soon.

FACT: According to the Florida Department of Health in Orange County, in order to achieve “herd immunity” — which means the disease is no longer likely to spread — about 78 percent of Orange County’s population will need to be vaccinated. In fact, it may be more than 78 percent if we find that the virus variants become more prevalent. Due to the amount of residents who still need to be vaccinated, getting to that 78 percent mark will take quite a long time.

MYTH: I will become COVID-19 positive once I get the vaccine.

FACT: You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine because the vaccine contains no part of the virus whatsoever. The vaccine works by producing a protein that makes your cells produce a protein that is similar to the one found in the virus. This allows your body to identify the protein sequence as foreign and make antibodies to fight against it. Therefore, the vaccine works because it primes your immune system to recognize and fight off a disease, but it does not cause an infection.

MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccine causes severe side effects.

FACT: Like all vaccines, severe side effects can occur, but these are extremely rare. The most reported side effects are similar to those experienced with other vaccines and include injection-site soreness, fatigue and body aches. Experiencing these side effects means your immune system is responding to the vaccine and creating antibodies against COVID-19. Vaccine providers are observing people with a history of anaphylaxis for 30 minutes and all other individuals for 15 minutes after receiving the shot.

MYTH: The vaccine is too new, and I am not comfortable with having anyone in my family take it.

FACT: The vaccines have been tested thoroughly and are safe. Residents should educate themselves with trustworthy and credible information from the CDC. Be wary of false and potentially harmful misinformation on the Internet or hearsay from gossip. Get the facts from reliable information sources and make an informed, educated decision for yourself.

MYTH: COVID-19’s survival rate is high; therefore I do not need the vaccine.

FACT: Although the virus kills a higher percentage of our most vulnerable population (e.g., older and those with underlying health issues), if you are not vaccinated you could still pass on the virus to someone who might be severely affected or die from the virus. The virus has also killed young, healthy people and children. At this point, we still do not understand the possible long-term health issues that COVID-19 might cause to anyone who has had the disease.

For more information and myths, visit: ocfl.net/VaccineMyths

