COVID-19 VACCINE  THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINES

- Vaccines are one of the most important and effective ways you can protect yourself, your family, your neighbors, and your community.
- Vaccines prevent disease and keep our communities safe and healthy.

HOW VACCINES WORK

- Vaccines help your immune system fight infections faster and more effectively. When you get a vaccine, it sparks your immune response, prompting your body to remember the virus so it can attack it if the virus ever invades again.
- Since vaccines are made of very small amounts of weak or dead virus, they won't make you sick.
- Many of the COVID-19 vaccines use mRNA technology. This method teaches our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies. Since there is no trace of the real virus in these vaccines, it's not possible to contract COVID or get sick from it.

COVID-19 VACCINE TESTING AND SAFETY

- After a vaccine is authorized or approved for use, many vaccine safety monitoring systems watch for possible side effects. This continued monitoring can pick-up on side effects that may not have been seen in clinical trials.
- If an unexpected side effect is seen, experts quickly study it further to assess whether it is a true safety concern. Experts then decide whether changes are needed in U.S. vaccine recommendations.
- This monitoring is critical to help ensure the benefits continue to outweigh the risks for people who receive vaccines.
- COVID-19 vaccines are being carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will be authorized or approved only if they make it substantially less likely you'll get COVID-19.

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE

- Most side effects from getting a vaccine are a sign that your body is starting to build immunity (protection) against a disease.
- The most common side effects after vaccination are mild. They include:
  - Pain, swelling, or redness where the shot was given.
  - Mild fever.
  - Chills.
  - Feeling tired.
  - Headache.
  - Muscle and joint aches.
  - Fainting, although uncommon, but which can happen after any medical procedure, including vaccinations.

COVID-19 VACCINE EFFICACY

- The current COVID-19 vaccine is a two-dose vaccine. Vaccination is not considered complete without both dosages administered; the second dose is administered three to four weeks after the initial vaccine.
- Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.

THE VACCINE'S ROLE IN THE PANDEMIC

- The vaccine won't end the pandemic unless the majority of the public is vaccinated. It's important that everyone participates so we can achieve community-wide immunity, which is indicated by a vaccination level of 70-85%.
- As we move toward achieving community-wide vaccination and immunity, it's important that people remember basic COVID-19 safety measures to stop the spread of disease: wear a mask, watch your distance, wash your hands, and stay home when you're sick.a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.