



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
Caring today for a healthy tomorrow

COVID-19 Vaccine: Important Facts

Kent County Health Department

The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) Clinical Services Division is working closely with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prepare for the forthcoming novel coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.

How do vaccines protect our community?

If 75–95 percent of the population is vaccinated, vaccines will protect people who have not been vaccinated by reducing the rate of person-to-person transmission (community protection). Vaccination has led to community protection from other illnesses, including whooping cough (pertussis).¹

Who is making a COVID-19 vaccine?

More than one pharmaceutical company may provide a vaccine, including [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#). KCHD anticipates a limited vaccine supply at first and will distribute it in accordance with CDC guidance and ongoing input from the community.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Like all medicines, vaccines can have some adverse effects. However, vaccines provide more benefits than risks.² Data from both Pfizer and Moderna clinical trials, with over 73,000 combined participants, demonstrate that the COVID-19 vaccines have been well tolerated by people across all participating ages, genders, races, and ethnicities with no serious safety concerns observed. The most commonly reported side effects of vaccination were fatigue, muscle or joint pain, and headache—all among less than 10 percent of trial participants.³

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine?

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are 95 percent effective, a calculation based on observed infection rates among nonvaccinated (placebo) participants compared to vaccinated participants in each clinical trial.⁴ According to Pfizer, “efficacy was consistent across age, gender, race, and ethnicity demographics,” including older adults.⁵

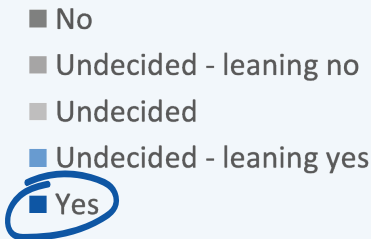
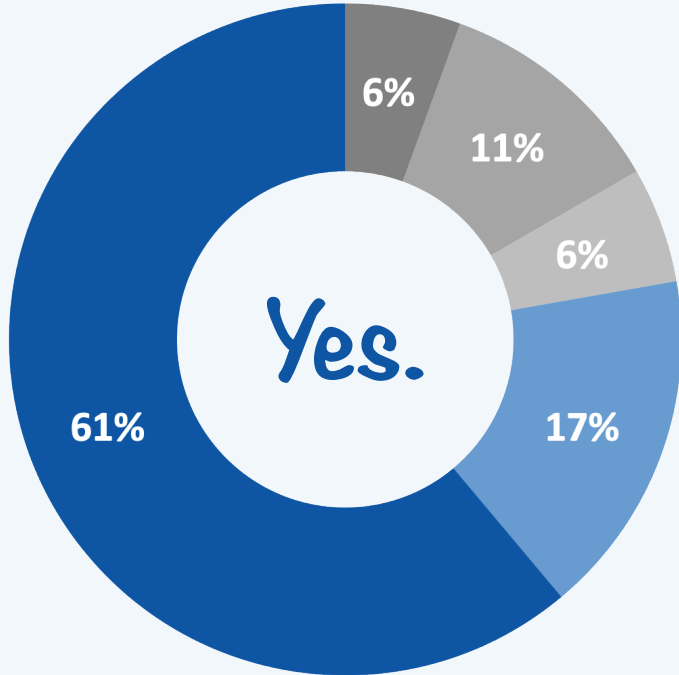
Where can I get the vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccine storage and handling guidance vary by manufacturer but will require both cold and ultra-cold storage (-4° to -22°F and -76°F to -112°F, respectively). Once ready for distribution, the vaccine may be held at refrigerator temperatures for 24 hours and room temperature for up to six hours. Because of these rigorous storage and handling requirements, initial vaccination sites in Kent County will be limited. These sites will include health department clinics and health systems.

How often do I need the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine will likely require two doses over a specific time period. Individuals receiving the vaccine will need to return to the Health Department or the location where the vaccine was first administered to receive the second dose.

Are You getting vaccinated?



Source: Public Sector Consultants interviews with 18 human services, business, and religious leaders across Kent County.

For more answers to frequently asked questions, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html)



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Endnotes

- 1 Volker Vetter, Gülhan Denizer, Leonard R. Friedland, Jyothsna Krishnan, and Marla Shapiro. September 4, 2017. "Understanding Modern-day Vaccines: What You Need to Know." *Annals of Medicine*, 50:2, 110-120. Accessed November 23, 2020. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07853890.2017.1407035>
- 2 Vetter et al. "Understanding Modern-day Vaccines."
- 3 Pfizer. November 18, 2020. "Pfizer and Biontech Conclude Phase 3 Study of COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate, Meeting All Primary Efficacy Endpoints." *Pfizer*. Accessed November 23, 2020. <https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-conclude-phase-3-study-covid-19-vaccine>; Moderna. November 16, 2020. "Moderna's COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate Meets its Primary Efficacy Endpoint in the First Interim Analysis of the Phase 3 COVE Study." *Moderna*. Accessed November 23, 2020. <https://investors.modernatx.com/news-releases/news-release-details/modernas-covid-19-vaccine-candidate-meets-its-primary-efficacy>
- 4 Pfizer. November 18, 2020. "Pfizer and Biontech Conclude Phase 3 Study."; Moderna. November 16, 2020. "Moderna's COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate."
- 5 Pfizer. November 18, 2020. "Pfizer and Biontech Conclude Phase 3 Study."