

COVID-19 vaccine and substance use disorder: What you need to know



If you have a substance use disorder (SUD) or are in recovery, getting the COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you from being very sick from COVID-19.

Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have an SUD?

Yes, it's important for you to get vaccinated against COVID-19.



Worried about using again?

COVID-19 stress can be tough. Reach out for support if you need it or find a treatment center: <https://findtreatment.gov/>



If you're in recovery or currently using drugs: You might have a weaker immune system, so the COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you from getting very sick. A weak immune system needs help protecting your body against infection.



If you have other health conditions: Having health problems like heart or lung disease makes it more likely you'll get very sick from COVID-19. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine can help prevent severe symptoms.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people with SUD?

Yes, it is likely safe. But before you get the vaccine, consider:



Medicine interactions: Most prescription and over-the-counter medicines do not cause reactions with the COVID-19 vaccine. However, talk to your doctor about your medicines before you get the vaccine, just to be sure.



Alcohol and drug use: Try to avoid alcohol and drugs before and after you get the vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends stopping drinking alcohol and using other drugs, such as tobacco, opioids, and meth, 1 week before getting the vaccine and for about 1 week after.

Alcohol and drugs can make the vaccine not work as well and cause more side effects because they weaken your immune system and cause swelling in your body.

What should I know about vaccine side effects?

Some people have side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine, which can be a sign that the vaccine is working. Yet, some side effects can be mistaken as withdrawal symptoms. Talk with your doctor or health care provider if you have symptoms after getting the vaccine and are unsure what's causing them.

COVID-19 vaccine side effects may include:



Pain or discomfort where you got the shot



Feeling weak and tired



Headache



A low-grade fever (99-100.3 degrees Fahrenheit)



Severe allergic reactions, which are rare



Muscle or joint pain

Where can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?



To find a vaccine near you, visit: [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)



Visit our website to find out if you can get a COVID-19 vaccine at no cost through CDC's Bridge Access Program.

[* bit.ly/3QMEI8B](https://bit.ly/3QMEI8B)



Learn more

➤ To learn more, visit the CDC's webpage on COVID-19 and people who use drugs or have SUD: cdc.gov/drugoverdose/resources/covid-drugs-QA.html



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