

**SO THAT
I CAN...**



...enjoy coffee with my colleagues again



VACCINATION AGAINST COVID-19

Verified information for a more informed choice

#YesToVaccines

#YesToVaccines

**SO THAT
I CAN...**



**ENJOY COFFEE TOGETHER
AGAIN**

**VISIT
OUR CLIENTS ENJOY THE
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

WITH OUR COLLEAGUES

TALK TO COLLEAGUES

WITHOUT A FACE MASK ON

NETWORK GO WORK ON
A PROJECT ABROAD
AT CONFERENCES

PLAY FOOTBALL WITH COLLEAGUES

**AFTER WORK BE SURE I DON'T LOSE
MY JOB**

**So that
we can...**

The past year was challenging for everyone. For many of us, our daily social contact was reduced to a mere computer screen. Others battled with stepping in for colleagues on sick-leave or juggling the challenge of combining working from home with unexpected home-schooling. In the spring of 2020, few of us expected that the word ,coronavirus' would upend not only our bi-annual reviews but would continue to affect our plans even for our office Christmas parties. Despite that, we are convinced that now is not the time to give in to the frustration. Quite the opposite.

Now we can all help

At this point, the medical community does not have a medicine that would get rid of COVID-19. The vaccine is thus the only resource we currently have in overcoming the virus. We deeply care about the safety and health of you and your loved ones, which is why we put together an overview of verified information and frequently asked questions related to the vaccine. This information was put together in cooperation with the Veda pomáha – COVID-19 initiative that connects medical experts and scientists determined to help Slovakia overcome the virus as soon as possible.

Our goal is to provide useful facts so that you can make an independent and responsible decision.

Even though many of us still have time to consider whether to get the vaccine or not, at this point you can be a reliable advisor for those around you who are already eligible.

Immunizing a majority of the population has a huge potential to lessen the burden on our hospitals and healthcare system, as well as decreasing the number of cases with long-term effects. Not only that, it will allow us all a gradual return to normal life.

Continue reading to learn more about the benefits of getting the vaccine.

Why get vaccinated against COVID-19

The vaccine is necessary

Millions of people around the world have already died of COVID-19. The medical community at this point does not have a medicine that would get rid of the virus. Available medicines are only capable of suppressing and alleviating symptoms. The vaccine is thus the only resource we currently have in overcoming the virus, protecting the health of all of us, and finally returning to a more normal way of life.

SO THAT I CAN...

...brainstorm with colleagues face to face



Interested in learning more about how the vaccine can help?

How does the vaccine work?

- A vaccine is the most reliable form of prevention against infection and a severe case of illness. By getting a vaccine, you are not only protecting yourself but those around you as well. It is a method that allows your immune system to build up a long-term response against COVID-19. This is because the vaccine activates the production of specific antibodies and cellular immunity, which both help to protect your body when it's in contact with a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the future.

Isn't achieving herd immunity enough to defeat the virus?

- Building collective immunity against COVID-19 in this way is dangerous. Every individual that contracts the virus can have a severe case of the disease or even die. Even if you yourself happen to have an asymptomatic or mild case of the disease, you can still infect those closest to you and they might not be so lucky. Also, this type of collective immunity building would actually take much longer. Thus achieving collective immunity through a robust vaccination effort is the safest and quickest way to end the pandemic.

What level of collective immunity do we need to be able to live as we did before the pandemic?

- The only way how to stop the pandemic is through collective immunity. This is because thanks to collective immunity, even those who are not vaccinated have a certain level of protection. To be able to protect those who won't get vaccinated for medical or other reasons, we need to get as many people vaccinated as possible. In number terms that is at least 70-75% of the population.

Do I need a vaccine even if I have overcome COVID-19 already?

- Getting a vaccine makes sense even if someone has already overcome COVID-19. Every individual has a different immuno-response and at the moment, we do not have sufficient information about how long immunity lasts after overcoming the virus. Thus, getting a vaccine is still the most reliable form of mass future prevention. Only a vaccine can ensure a robust and uniform level of protection for everyone.

The vaccine is safe

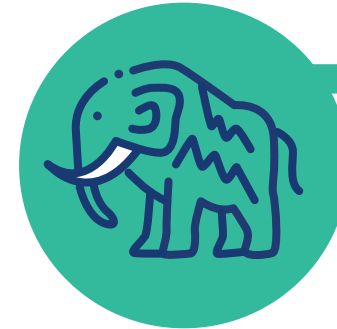
The safety of each vaccine registered by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) was tested on a sample of at least 30 000 people in various countries around the world. Publicly available clinical trial data shows that serious side-effects have been reported rarely and with deaths occurring in exceptionally rare cases. The causality of their occurrence with the vaccine is regularly evaluated.

Every single vaccine can cause side effects and the one against COVID-19 is no exception. The majority of documented side-effects have been mild and short-lasting (1-3 days after the shot). Most often, the side-effects are swelling and pain in the area of the shot, fatigue, headaches, muscle aches, or an increased temperature. These are all signs that the body is reacting to the vaccine and creating the necessary and wanted immune protection.

More severe side-effects have been documented amongst a small portion of those vaccinated against COVID-19. However, these side effects are not any different from those of vaccines against other diseases. The pills and medicinal drugs that a lot of us consume regularly for common diseases have many more potential side-effects than the vaccine. The risks of unwanted side-effects, such as a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine, are much smaller than the risks associated with a COVID-19 infection.

30 000
VACCINES WERE TESTED
ON AT LEAST 30 000 PEOPLE
IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD

Benefits vs. risks of the vaccine against COVID-19



Mammoth
benefits



Risks smaller than
those of a mosquito
bite

Source:  MINISTERTVO
ZDRAVNIŠTVA
SLOVENSKE REPUBLIKE

SO THAT I CAN...

...bond with my team during team-buildings



Interested in more information about vaccine safety?

Does the vaccine contain the COVID-19 virus?

- No, the vaccine itself does not contain the live virus and thus cannot cause COVID-19 infection.

If I get vaccinated, can I still get infected and transmit COVID-19 to other people? Will I still need to wear a mask?

- The vaccine itself does not contain the live virus and thus cannot cause a COVID-19 infection. A person becomes immune against COVID-19 approximately 10-14 days after they receive their second dose of the vaccine. Before then, they are still susceptible to infection, and thus it is necessary to still follow the public safety measures of wearing a mask, social distancing, and washing your hands. However, until the required level of collective immunity is achieved, it will be necessary to maintain these public safety measures even after vaccination.

Is it necessary to consult getting vaccinated with my doctor?

- If you are generally in good health condition, it is not necessary to consult your doctor before getting the vaccine. However if you are being treated for any chronic illness, suffer from strong allergies, or are pregnant and/or breastfeeding, we recommend consulting getting the vaccine with your doctor.

Should I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or plan to get pregnant?

- At the moment, there isn't sufficient data available for all developed vaccines to be able to answer this question. We recommend consulting the issue with your doctor in this case. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists for example recommends that pregnant women do get the vaccine when eligible.

Long term side-effects

VACCINE

All declared side-effects are **short-term**.



Long terms side-effects associated with vaccines are **very rare**.



None of the 82 vaccines registered in Slovakia **have been de-registered** due to documented severe side-effects.



Various types of mRNA vaccines have been tested on volunteers for the past 3 years and there are **no documented long-term side-effects to this day**.



COVID-19

A portion of those infected continue to experience **long-term symptoms** even after overcoming the virus.

A study published in Lancet shows that up to 76% of people hospitalized with COVID **continued to experience symptoms even 6 months** after overcoming the virus.

A study by Australian scientists shows that 56% of patients showed **lung damage even 3 months after** being released from the hospital.

At this point, it is unclear how long the impact of a COVID-19 infection can last and whether some after-effects won't be **permanent**.

The safety of the vaccine was not compromised by the length of its development

Scientific knowledge and technological progress have allowed for much more rapid development of the vaccine than we are used to. How is this possible?

All scientists working on developing the vaccine based their research on many years of previous and existing research into the virus that causes the infectious disease SARS. This is due to the fact that SARS is evolutionarily similar to COVID-19. Also, existing technologies and verified methodologies that we have thanks to the development of vaccines such as the one against Hepatitis B were used in the development of the British vaccine.

Some vaccines against COVID-19 do feature the usage of new technology, however that technology has been studied in detail and perfected for many decades in other fields. It is thanks to the unprecedented effort of the scientific community, the finances dedicated to the research and development efforts, and the staggering amount of volunteers (at least 30 thousand people) that took part in the clinical trials that the vaccines met the safety and efficiency criteria required for successful registration with the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

Very strict rules are applied when new vaccines entering the market apply for registration. The aim of the registration process is to guarantee the maximum safety of the vaccine. Therefore, surveillance of the vaccine and those vaccinated is carried out even long after the vaccine is approved.

To this day, there has not been a single vaccine whose registration by the EMA has been taken back due to verifiable severe side-effects. All vaccines remain in circulation.

Interested in more information about how the vaccine works?

What vaccines are available in Slovakia?

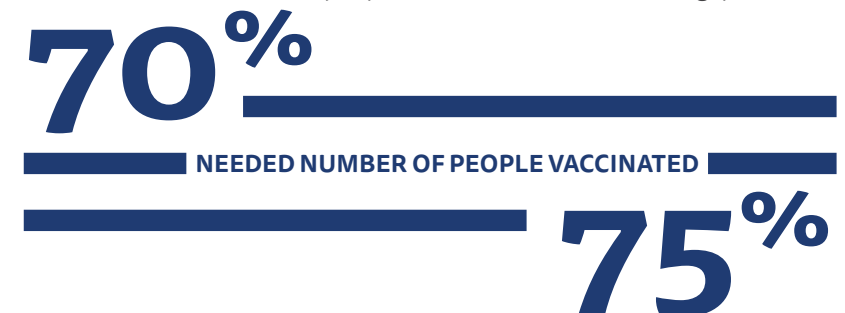
- At the moment, the mRNA vaccines (that from the Pfizer/BioNTech consortium and that from Moderna) and so-called vector vaccine from AstraZeneca are available in Slovakia. Janssen vaccine and Sputnik V should also be available in the future.

At the moment, there are 3 available vaccines in Slovakia – from Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca. What are the differences between them?

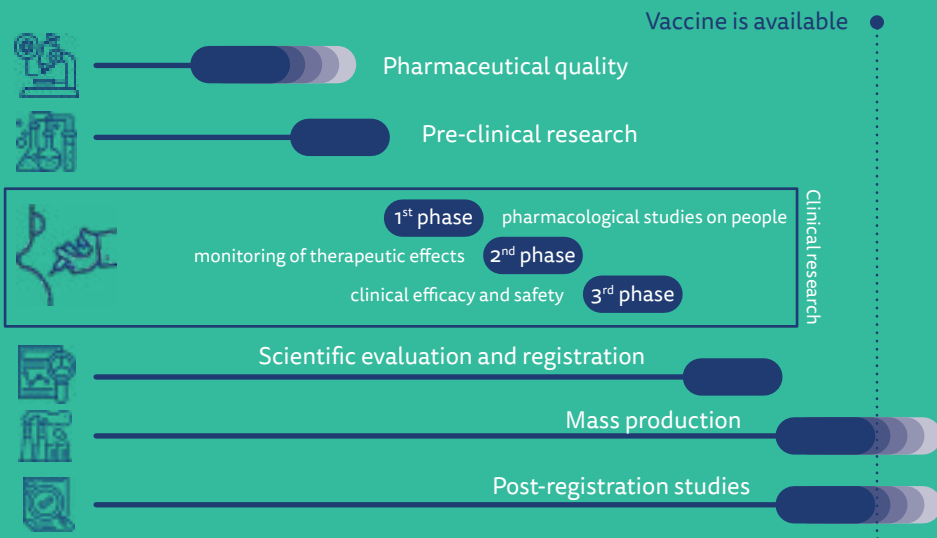
- To put it simply, vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer do not differ in the way they teach the body how to identify and kill the virus, thus protecting the body from the disease in similar ways. Both are based on the mRNA principle. In addition to mRNA vaccines, there is also a so-called vector vaccine from AstraZeneca currently available. From a safety point of view, all vaccines are comparably safe. Clinical trials have shown that mRNA vaccines are more effective than the AstraZeneca vector vaccine, but the latter is also highly effective in reducing the risk of severe COVID-19, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19.

Will the vaccine alter my DNA?

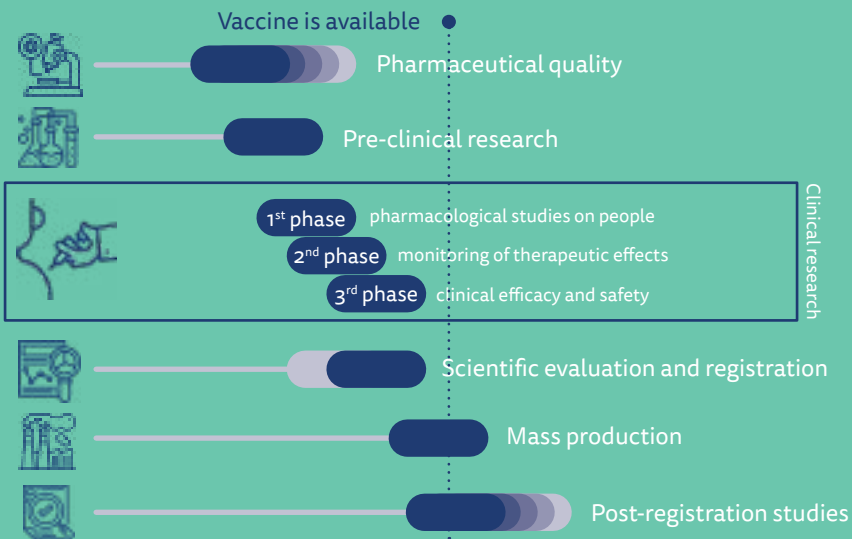
- No, there is no reason to fear something like this. The vaccine contains mRNA that is different from DNA. mRNA from the vaccine cannot enter our cells' nuclei in any way and thus cannot re-write or change your DNA.




Typical vaccine development



Development of the COVID-19 vaccine



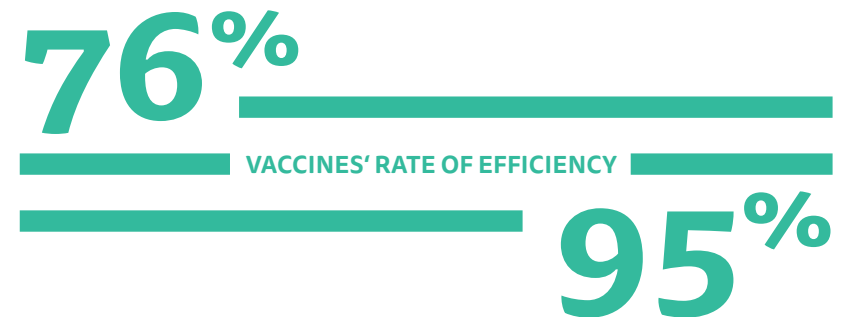
Source:  **MINISTERSTVO ZDRAVOTNÍCTVA SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY**

The vaccine works

As with any other vaccine, the one against COVID-19 works in the way that your body will build a natural immunity against the virus after vaccination. This prevents the possibility of future infection. All vaccines against COVID-19 that have successfully passed clinical trials and were then approved by the respective local regulatory boards display a rate of efficiency around 76 - 95%. This means that a high % of people can develop a sufficient protection against the disease and do not get infected upon contact with the Coronavirus. Based on available data, the vaccine is also effective against the new, more transmissible strains of the coronavirus.

We know based on more available data that a person becomes immune against COVID-19 approximately 10-14 days after receiving their second dose of the vaccine.

Getting a vaccine makes sense even if someone has already overcome COVID-19. Every individual has a different immune response and at the moment, we do not have sufficient information about how long immunity lasts after overcoming the virus. Thus, getting a vaccine is still the most reliable form of future prevention. Only a vaccine can ensure a robust and uniform level of protection for everyone.



Interested in more information about the efficiency of the vaccine?

Will I be immune against COVID-19 immediately after my 1st dose of the vaccine?

- No. A person becomes immune against COVID-19 approximately 10-14 days after receiving their second dose of the vaccine. Before then it is still possible to get infected, which is why it is necessary to wear a mask, socially distance, and wash your hands regularly even after the first dose. However, until the required level of collective immunity is achieved, it will be necessary to maintain these public safety measures even after vaccination.

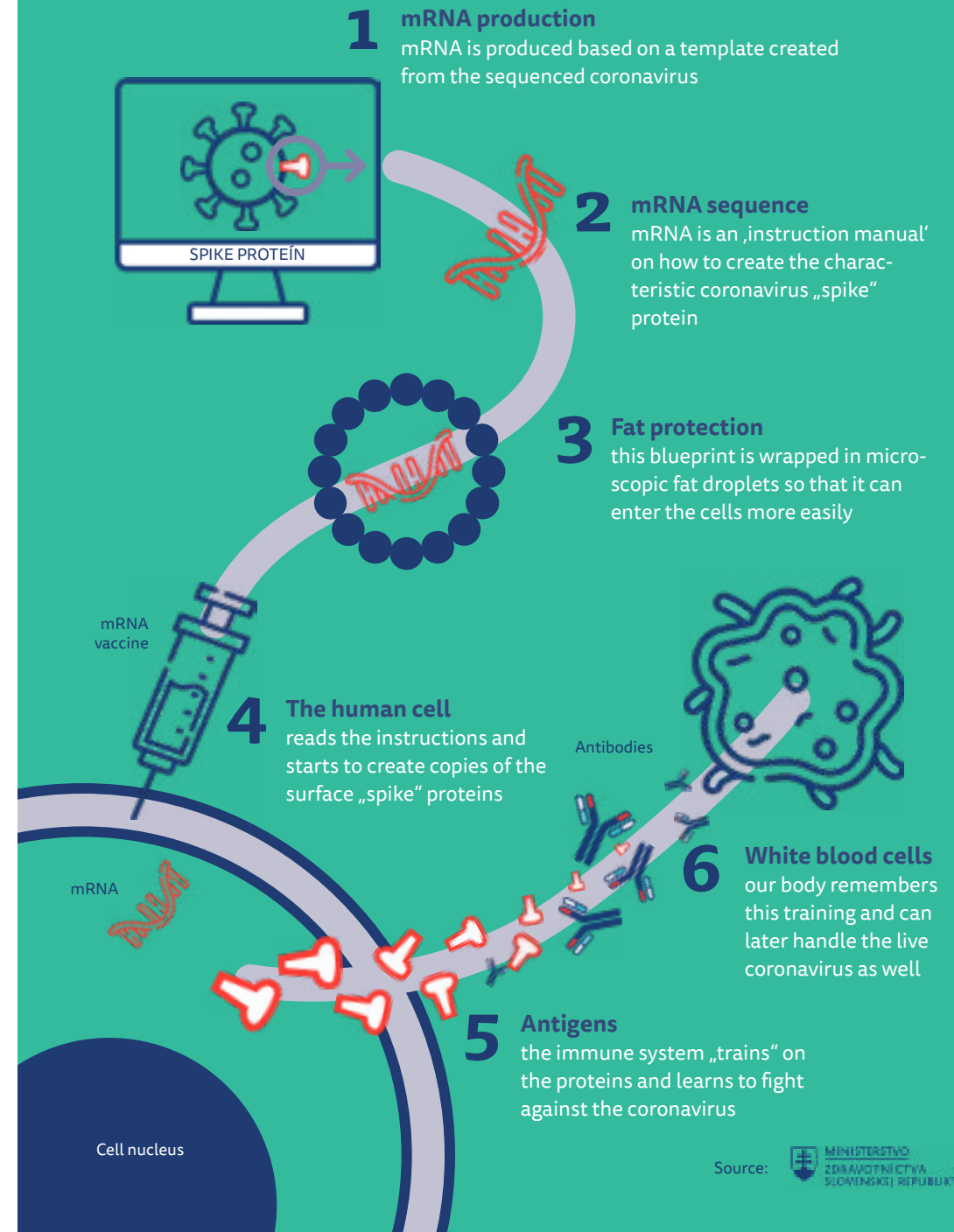
Will it be necessary to get another vaccine after some time (for example after 2 years)?

- Given that the first people to receive their second dose of the vaccine only got it a couple of months ago, we do not have a definitive answer to this question yet. We will find out how long immunity lasts and whether getting a vaccine again in the future will be necessary only after enough research and data has been collected. This research is ongoing at the moment. From what we know so far, depending on the age and other factors, antibody immunity lasts for at least a couple of months, with cellular immunity projected to last even longer.

For which diagnoses or associated diseases is vaccination not recommended?

- Vaccination is not recommended for people who have displayed a severe or life-threatening allergic reaction after any other vaccination in the past. The vaccine is also not recommended if you suffer from a bleeding disorder or have a very weak or compromised immune system. In case of any doubts, please consult getting the vaccine with your doctor prior to.

How does the mRNA vaccine work



SO THAT I CAN...



...be sure I don't lose my job



You can find many more answers to questions related to the vaccine at www.ZaockujemSa.sk

#YesToVaccines

This brochure was created by:

#KtoPomozeSlovensku

