

# COVID-19 VACCINE

## Safety Tips for Consumers

### OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 vaccination rollout is one of the largest mass vaccination efforts in recent history, both worldwide and in the United States. **To protect yourself and others, it is important to do your part and get a COVID-19 vaccine.**

Initially, the vaccine will continue to be in short supply, which unfortunately also opens the door to criminals to attempt scams, fraud, and forgery. We saw this in 2020 when criminals took advantage of PPE shortages to sell counterfeit face masks to consumers and first responders.

U.S. and foreign law enforcement have started to alert the public of potential fraud, scam, and counterfeit schemes criminals might attempt to exploit the vaccination efforts and vaccine shortages and sell fake COVID-19 vaccines. For our continued [coverage of scams click here](#).

Below are key tips on how to avoid COVID-19 vaccine scams and frauds, as well as the resources you can trust to find accurate COVID-19 vaccine information.

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## Tips To Keep You Safe

1

### Do not purchase COVID-19 vaccines and treatments over the Internet

- Do not purchase COVID-19 vaccines and treatments through an online pharmacy.
- COVID-19 vaccines **WILL NOT** be sold online on stand-alone websites, online pharmacies, or online marketplaces. Currently authorized vaccines to have strict temperature control requirements and cannot just be mailed to you.
- You will only be able to get the vaccine through a licensed U.S. healthcare provider, a brick-and-mortar pharmacy, hospital, licensed medical provider, or Departments of Health.
- If you have any questions about how to get an authentic vaccine or questions about vaccines themselves, please consult the [CDC's COVID-19 vaccine information page](#), your state, county, or local health department, your primary care provider (PCP), local hospital, or local pharmacy.
- Always consult with a licensed medical professional, public health authorities, or your pharmacists to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 treatment.

## 2

### COVID-19 scams are already prevalent

- Scammers have already been caught selling counterfeit masks or PPEs, fake COVID-19 treatments, and fake COVID-19 vaccines. These same criminals are ready to turn their scams on vaccine efforts.
- Ignore unsolicited offers for vaccinations that are not from public health agencies, your doctor, or your hospital. Check with public health authorities on any such offers.
- Do not respond to texts, emails, or robocalls about vaccines or treatments.
- Report attempts of fraud to [COVID19FRAUD@dhs.gov](mailto:COVID19FRAUD@dhs.gov) or your health authority, fraud lines, and law enforcement.
- Be wary of ads for vaccines and treatments on social media not run by federal or state public health agencies.
- For more ways on how to protect yourself against COVID vaccine scams, visit U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [Operation Stolen Promise](#).

## 3

### Healthcare Professionals: Know your source

- Do not purchase COVID-19 vaccines from entities that do not possess pharmaceutical wholesale licenses from your state's Board of Pharmacy.
- You can check licensing with your state's Board of Pharmacy or [through the FDA](#).

## Trusted Resources for Your Vaccine Questions

If you have any questions about how to get an authentic COVID-19 vaccine or questions about the vaccines themselves:

- Please consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [COVID-19 vaccine information](#) page.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) [COVID-19 vaccine information](#), your state and local Departments of Public Health websites have trusted information on:

- Who will be vaccinated and when;
- Costs associated with vaccination; and
- Where to go for a COVID-19 vaccine.

For more ways on how to protect yourself against COVID-19 vaccine scams:

- Consult the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [Operation Stolen Promise](#) page.



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (as of December 15, 2020). ICE pivots to combat COVID-19 vaccine fraud with launch of Operation Stolen Promise 2.0. Retrieved from <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ice-pivots-combat-covid-19-vaccine-fraud-launch-operation-stolen-promise-20>

<sup>2</sup> INTERPOL (December 2, 2020). INTERPOL warns of organized crime threat to COVID-19 vaccines. Retrieved from <https://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2020/INTERPOL-warns-of-organized-crime-threat-to-COVID-19-vaccines>