Comparing the COVID-19 Vaccines

Two kinds of COVID-19 vaccines have received emergency use authorization (EUA) from the FDA.

The vaccines differ in how they get viral genetic material to the cells, but they are similar in how they protect you from the virus.

It's important that our communities are vaccinated against COVID-19 quickly, and it is recommended that you should accept the first vaccine offered to you.

	mRNA Vaccines (e.g. Pfizer and Moderna)	**Adenovirus-Based Vaccines** (e.g. Johnson & Johnson)
How do the vaccines work?	mRNA vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) genetic material, not the actual virus, to trigger a person's immune system to make protective antibodies against COVID-19. (CDC)	Adenovirus-based vaccines use a cold virus that has been engineered not to duplicate itself. The modified cold virus delivers a plan to the cells about how to make a COVID-19 spike protein. This method does not cause a cold or COVID-19 and has a long history of safety. (CDC)
Will you get COVID-19 from the vaccine?	No. These vaccines use only a messenger RNA (mRNA) gene, not the actual virus, to trigger a person's immune system to make protective antibodies against COVID-19.	No. This vaccine does not cause infection with either COVID-19 or the inactive cold virus. (CDC)
How long before the vaccines protect you?	Two weeks after your second dose.	14 days or more after your dose.
How many doses does it take?	Two doses, several weeks apart.	One dose.
What are the vaccine side effects?	For both types of vaccines, the most common side effects are pain and swelling in the arm where you received the shot. In addition, you may have fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.	
Do the vaccines change your DNA?	The vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.	
How effective are the vaccines at protecting you from COVID-19?	All approved COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing infection and decreasing the severity of illness. It is possible for people who have been vaccinated to still get COVID-19, but most will experience a milder case and are less likely to need serious medical intervention or be hospitalized if they are vaccinated. (CDC)	

For more vaccine resources, visit TexasHealth.org/Vaccine.

Sources:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html
https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/mrna-vaccine-basics.html
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