

COVID queries: Do I need the vaccine if I've had COVID-19?

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Q: I already had COVID-19 and recovered. Why should I get the vaccine when my body is already immune to it now?

A: When someone has had an infection, and the body has produced [antibodies](#) as a result, this is called "natural immunity." But early

evidence suggests natural immunity to COVID-19 may not be very long-lasting.

At least one [study](#) indicates that if you had COVID-19 and are not vaccinated, your risk of getting COVID-19 a second time are about two times greater than for people who were infected but did get vaccinated.

"Even if you've had COVID-19, whether it was a mild case or more severe, we still very much recommend that you get the vaccine," says Martin Herrmann, M.D., medical director of Mayo Clinic Health System in Waseca and New Prague. "It's important to do all you can to protect yourself against this virus. Plus, getting vaccinated protects others as well because it reduces the spread of COVID-19."

One caveat to keep in mind is that if you've recently had COVID-19 and were treated with [monoclonal antibodies](#), you should delay your vaccination for about 90 days. Monoclonal antibodies are proteins made in a laboratory that mimic the body's immune response, and they can keep you from developing a robust response to the vaccine.

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