

What happens if you get vaccinated during COVID-19 positive?



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DR ZUBAIR KHALED HUQ

Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is critical to your protection. When COVID-19 cases spread, everyone is at risk of contracting the infection. A person may be symptomatic or test positive at the time of vaccination and do not know it. Alternatively, many people may have been asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic at the time of vaccination. What if you have COVID-19 but do not know when you have been vaccinated? No, getting the vaccine while having COVID-19 will not make you sicker or less sick, but it may reduce the vaccine's effectiveness.

We are still in the midst of COVID waves. Increasing mutations give rise to different variants, now posing a global threat. So, keep up the COVID-appropriate behaviour. It is worrying if you have symptoms or test positive right before a vaccination because the newer virus variants are scarier for those who are not vaccinated or have low immunity. There may also be new vaccine-resistant variants.

People who are currently COVID positive and in quarantine or who suspect COVID symptoms should not get vaccinated but should first complete the quarantine period. Due to its rapid spread, it is rare that an asymptomatic person develops symptoms later and is unaware of being positive. People exposed to COVID-19 positive patients or suspect even mild symptoms should stay home rather than be vaccinated. If you are negative, you can wait 30 days to get your first dose. Your immunity should be high at that time.

As mentioned above, it can happen that many who turn up for the vaccination appointment only realise their possible positive status only if they are subjected to a test. While it is concerning to think about getting vaccinated when somebody is already COVID positive, scientifically, there is no conclusive evidence of how the vaccine may react when there is already an active virus in the body. This may, however, depend on whether somebody is showing symptoms and how severe the symptoms in

themselves are.

While an active infection may not affect the vaccine, some experts believe a suspected COVID-19 case may reduce the virus's efficacy. Vaccines may not be able to stimulate a healthy immune response. The vaccine's effectiveness and antibody production are key. That means the immune system is already busy fighting the disease and may not mount a healthy and effective response when a vaccine dose is administered.

Since the infection already pushes your immune system into action, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, it can directly impact the immune response generated by the vaccine. If there is already some level of inflammation present in the body or symptoms you may be already showcasing, the side effects caused by the vaccine can intensify the severity of the same or even take longer to resolve.

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Changing your diet could add up to a decade to life expectancy

Dietary changes that include more legumes, whole grains, nuts, and less red and processed meat could add over a decade to a young adult's life expectancy in the United States, according to a new study in PLOS Medicine.

The expected gains in life expectancy would be smaller but still significant for older people. Dietary risk factors are estimated to cause 11 million deaths and 255 million disability-adjusted life-years annually.

The study estimates that starting at age 20, switching from a typical Western diet to an optimal diet would increase life expectancy (LE) by over a decade for both women (10.7 years) and men (13 years). Eating more legumes, whole grains, nuts, less red meat, and processed meat would result in the greatest gains in LE years (females: 1.6; males: 1.9).

Changing from a typical diet to an optimised diet at age 60 could increase LE by 8.0 years for women and 8.8 years for men, and 80-year-olds could gain 3.4 years from such dietary changes.

According to the authors, knowing the relative health benefits of various food groups can help people improve their health.



Global guidelines for identifying credible health information sources on social media



STAR HEALTH DESK

Online health information is widely shared and accessed, influencing daily health decisions. Social media companies must improve access to science-based, credible health information to protect their users.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Digital Channels team recently collaborated with the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) and the British Medical Journal (BMJ). Fifteen global health experts participated in the meeting. The discussion revealed that the principles and attributes could help content creators create high-quality health content. Participants agreed that people need media literacy training to assess the credibility of online health sources. Consider media literacy programs to help reach this goal.

Also, social media platforms should provide content moderation in as many markets and languages as possible to combat misinformation. Participants agreed that having recommendations that apply to various social media platforms could be useful due to multiple content formats and policies.

Finally, social media companies should commit to removing misinformation from their platforms and actively encouraging users to share their progress. Transparency and accountability are required in health and safety.

Quantifying the global impact of antimicrobial resistance

Antimicrobial resistance kills millions of people every year. Noticeably, bacterial antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a growing cause of morbidity and mortality. The researchers have now estimated the number of AMR-related deaths globally.

They estimated AMR-related deaths using two counterfactual scenarios (the comparator was a hypothetical scenario in which drug-susceptible infections replaced drug-resistant infections).

In 2019, 4.95 million people died from bacterial AMR, with 1.27 million deaths directly attributable to AMR, according to global data and statistical modelling. The most common infectious syndrome death was lower respiratory tract infection.

The study shows that fighting antimicrobial resistance is as vital as fighting pandemics like COVID-19 and HIV. We need to focus on making antimicrobial resistance one of our top healthcare priorities.



Worst foods for high triglycerides

STAR HEALTH DESK

High cholesterol is when your blood contains too much of a fatty substance called cholesterol. Tobacco and alcohol use are major contributors to high cholesterol. You can lower your cholesterol by eating better and exercising more.

Starchy veggies: Limit starchy foods like corn and peas. Thus, the extra starch is not converted to triglycerides. Other options include cauliflower, kale, and mushrooms.

Baked beans with sugar or pork added: If beans contain sugar or pork, they may not be ideal. The can's label should state the ingredients and amount in it. Opt for black beans, high in fibre and protein but low in saturated fat and sugar.

Too much of a good thing: Fruit is good for you, especially if you eat it instead of a rich dessert. However, if you have high triglycerides, you should only eat 2-3 pieces of fruit per day.

Alcohol: The sugars in alcohol, whether wine, beer, or liquor, cause this. Too much sugar can be harmful. If your triglyceride levels are high, your doctor may advise you to stop drinking.

Canned fish packed in oil: Fish is heart-healthy. Check the label on canned fish to see if it is packed in oil. Buying canned fish in the water is recommendable.

Coconut: Coconut is trendy. You will find coconut milk, water, flakes, oil, and the fruit itself. But

coconut is high in saturated fats, so ask your doctor if you should limit or avoid it.

Starchy foods: Too much pasta, potatoes, or cereal can cause high cholesterol. Of course, you can still eat them but in moderation.

Sugary drinks: Sweet iced tea, regular soda, fruit juice, or syrupy coffee drinks may be too sweet for your body. It may convert some sugar to triglycerides.

Honey or Maple syrup: Consider honey and maple syrup healthier or more natural alternatives to sugar. But, like sugar, they raise triglycerides. When lowering triglycerides, reduce sugary sweeteners, even if they are not table sugar.

Baked goods: Due to your high triglycerides, you should avoid saturated fat. This includes the saturated fat in butter used in baking. Trans fats should also be avoided.

High-fat meats: You do not have to stop eating meat. But choose leaner cuts. Avoid all processed meats, including bacon, sausage, and ham, as they may cause heart disease and diabetes.

Butter or Margarine: When cooking meats and vegetables, use olive oil instead of butter or margarine, containing too much saturated fat or trans-fat. Walnut and flaxseed oils are great substitutes.

Ingesting too much fat can raise your cholesterol and increase your risk of heart disease. Choose your diet wisely to live healthily.

Source: WebMD



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