

## Vaccines

### What is a vaccine?

Vaccines are an important strategy for preventing serious diseases, as they work with the body's natural defenses to protect people from potentially dangerous illness.

Some vaccines contain tiny amounts of a live virus that cause disease. Because the amount is so small and weakened, vaccines safely stimulate the immune system to produce antibodies and prevent us from getting sick.

### What is an *influenza (flu)* vaccine and how does it work?

Seasonal influenza (flu) vaccines cause the body to develop antibodies about two weeks after vaccination. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend the flu vaccine for adults 65 years and older, adults with chronic health conditions including neurological diseases that cause dementia. Data suggests that flu vaccines have many benefits including reducing the risk of flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and even the risk of flu-related death.

### Is the flu vaccine right for my loved one?

Older adults and those with serious, chronic health conditions are at higher risk for getting very sick from flu symptoms and complications. People with Lewy body dementia (LBD) fall into both categories. LBD experts typically recommend the seasonal flu vaccine for their patients with LBD because of the higher risk for severe illness, but individual situations vary. Check with your healthcare provider for guidance on the flu vaccine for your particular health situation.

### Is there is a vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

In the United States, there are currently no vaccines approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to prevent COVID-19. Thankfully, there are several very promising vaccine candidates that will soon be under FDA review.

As approved vaccines become available, LBDA will coordinate with experts on our Scientific Advisory Committee and LBDA's Research Centers of Excellence to stay abreast on vaccine options and any potential for complications in people with LBD.

### Is a coronavirus vaccine right for my loved one?

The Lewy Body Dementia Association provides current and accurate information to help you have meaningful conversations with healthcare providers. This will help you make well-informed healthcare decisions.

Medical decisions regarding any COVID-19 vaccine or are best discussed with the healthcare providers who are most aware of any potential allergies, current medical conditions, medications, drug sensitivities, and one's overall goals of care.

**For more information:**

Vaccines for coronavirus disease 2019:

- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Flu and other vaccines:

- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [National Foundation for Infectious Diseases](#)
- [National Institute on Aging](#)
- [Alzheimer's Association](#)
- [Parkinson's Association](#)