HOW THE mRNA VACCINES WORK TO PREVENT COVID-19

The 1st vaccine dose goes into your arm muscle. The vaccine is made up of mRNA wrapped up in a protective bubble.

Think of the mRNA as an architect at a building site. It gives your cells instructions on how to make the spike protein that covers the coronavirus.

Your body already has everything it needs to build the spike protein, so your cells start building.

The 2nd dose is the same, and helps your body get stronger to be even more prepared to fight.

Your immune system sees the unfamiliar spike protein and sounds an alarm. White blood cells (WBC) are like coaches within your immune system. They make antibodies and learn to recognize and attack the spike protein.

The architect’s job is done, so the mRNA disappears from the body.

If you are later exposed to someone with COVID-19...

Your immune system already knows how to fight the spike protein covering the coronavirus. This is the big match—and your body is strong, fast, and ready to win!

A vaccine teaches your body how to fight if you are exposed to a virus.

After vaccination, your body is prepared to quickly protect you.

The ideas presented in this document reflect the latest public health thinking and scientific evidence as of March 2021. You are advised that the COVID-19 vaccine landscape remains highly fluid, and it is your responsibility to ensure that decisions are made based on the most up-to-date information available. Partners In Health does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment in the United States. The information, including but not limited to, text, graphics, images and other material contained in this document, are intended for informational purposes only.