**Vaccine Side Effects**

Here are common side effects that can occur with any vaccine:

* Pain, redness, or slight swelling in the arm (or injection site)
* Headache
* Fever
* Chills
* Fatigue and/or Weakness

These symptoms can start within 24 hours and usually last no longer than 72 hours.

**COVID-specific Vaccine Side Effect Reports**

All side effects should be reported via the vSafe app.

We have had the following adverse events reported, in particular after the second dose:

* Severe arm pain
* Nausea & diarrhea
* Full body achiness
* Cold sweats

Most COVID vaccine side effects started 4-8 hours after a dose.

First dose side effects tended to be more moderate yet less frequent. If they occurred they lasted about 2 & ½ days.

Second dose side effects tended to be more severe and more frequent. If they occurred, most people felt better after 24 hours.

**Managing Vaccine Side Effects**

You absolutely CAN use pain medicine to manage adverse events. The CDC recommends against taking the medicines right before being immunized, and instead taking them if/when side effects start. See your doctor/pharmacist for specific advice.

**PAIN**: Ibuprofen 2-800mg every 6 hours around the clock OR Acetaminophen 650mg every 6 hours around the clock. Try alternating (ibuprofen first, 2 hrs later acetaminophen, 2 hrs later ibuprofen, etc etc).

**Nausea & Diarrhea**: Ginger and/or Pedialyte or Gatorade to maintain fluids/electrolytes

**A NOTE FROM NEAL**

You’re receiving the second and final dose of your COVID vaccine. Today is a good day.

You’ll have your full immune response about 14 days from now. That will be a *great* day!

Your immunization is both a win personally and for the community-at-large. Being immunized protects you, but more importantly, it will also radically reduce transmission among the population. You guard the health of our most vulnerable. Thank you.

With this dose, a weight is lifted for you—finally!—and we collectively move closer to breathing easier (literally and figuratively). We must celebrate!

Celebrate the science and the healthcare professionals. Celebrate the officials who did the right thing. Celebrate our neighbors who rose up for our own little worlds.

Celebrate the people who spread good information, that preached hope and patience, that organized support or donated resources for those who needed it over this year.

Celebrate the small, selfless acts that went so very far. Celebrate those who went shopping for a neighbor, or someone who helped drive an elder to get their COVID shot.

We’ve had a very tough year. There is much to reflect on. COVID has shown us lots of ‘ugly,’ yes, but it has also brought out our best.

Someone very wise recently stated, “You are Americans; **your power lies with each other**.”

This is the lesson I carry with me now.

It’s the honor of my professional career—as a pharmacist and owner of an independent, family-owned local pharmacy—to be a helper and to have helped you.

