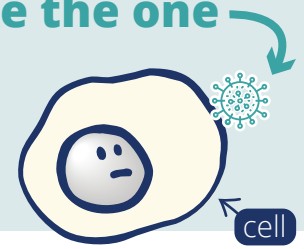


How COVID-19 vaccines work in your body to keep you safe

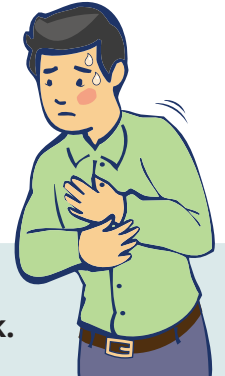
This is a coronavirus, like the one that causes COVID-19.

Its surface is covered in small bumps, called **spike proteins** that help it get into your cells.



Once inside your cells, the virus starts making lots of copies of itself.

When there are too many of these copies, **your cells can't work normally and you get sick.**



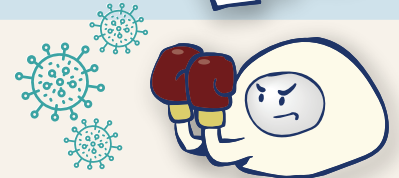
That's where the vaccine comes in!

The vaccine gives your immune system instructions for how to fight off the virus. (Your immune system is your body's natural defense system against getting sick.)



So, if you're exposed to the real virus later, **your immune system recognizes it and defends itself.**

This helps keep you from getting so sick that you have to go to the hospital, or so sick that you die.



The vaccine never enters the core of your cells where your DNA is – **that's why the vaccine can't change your DNA in any way.**

What about boosters?


Protection from the vaccine can fade over time.

COVID-19 booster shots help update your immune system - think of a booster as a software update for your body!



Kansas City COVID-19 Information Center:
[KCMO.org/COVID](https://kcmo.org/COVID)



 **There's no real virus in the vaccine,** so it can't give you COVID-19.