

# COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines Are Not as New as You Think



The first successful mRNA (messenger ribonucleic acid) vaccination was developed **30 years ago**. The COVID-19 vaccine was available to the public so quickly because the [research had already been done](#) and the discoveries of mRNA vaccines have always been **promising**.

Over the past 10 years, researchers **have been improving mRNA** vaccine effectiveness, and they are now proving to be up to [95% effective](#).

## Quick Facts

- mRNA vaccines **do not affect or interact with your DNA**.
- They **do not contain** any part of the virus.
- They **teach the body** to make memory cells that rev up production of antibodies, which can **detect when a virus is attacking your body** and **neutralize the virus to reduce the severity of sickness**.
- When someone gets vaccinated and then later gets sick with the virus, the body's immune system will **be ready to attack the virus** since it has already practiced with the vaccine.



### 1961–1990:

Pioneering studies discover mRNA

### 1990:

Initial mRNA COVID-19 vaccine platform is developed to prepare for a pandemic

### 1993–1996:

Large-scale mRNA trials on humans and mRNA vaccines are developed for diseases, such as rabies, Ebola, and Zika

### 2000:

Scientists begin studying safe interactions between mRNA vaccines and the body's immune system

### 2020:

Regulatory agencies in multiple countries authorize COVID-19 mRNA vaccines

#### Sources:

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- The University of Chicago Medicine. What is mRNA vaccine? April 21, 2021. Available at: [www.uchicagomedicine.org/forefront/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/what-is-an-mrna-vaccine](https://www.uchicagomedicine.org/forefront/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/what-is-an-mrna-vaccine)