

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.3.2025)

The main aim of any vaccine is to protect people against a disease, they do not fully protect people against infection. COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to protect people against severe COVID-19, hospitalisation and death; they do not fully protect people against infection. There is no evidence that the risk of being infected increases with increasing number of vaccinations.

There is a robust system for safety monitoring of all medicines authorised in the EU with suspected side effects reported at national level and collected centrally in EudraVigilance¹. Healthcare professionals are encouraged to report side effects. All suspected side effects are assessed alongside clinical study results and scientific literature to identify unusual patterns, which warrant further investigation.

Long Covid should not be confused with COVID-19 vaccine adverse reactions². Scientific evidence has shown that infection with SARS-CoV-2 can lead to long COVID, including thousands of cases before COVID-19 vaccines were introduced. There has been no safety signal from the very large body of data held by international regulators³ suggesting that long COVID is a possible side effect of COVID-19 vaccination. On the contrary, several studies indicate that vaccinated people who are subsequently infected with SARS-CoV-2 are less likely to report symptoms of long COVID than unvaccinated people.

The benefits of COVID-19 vaccines continue to outweigh their risks, especially for more vulnerable people. EMA continues to monitor emerging evidence on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines. In case of any safety concern, as usual the Commission will take necessary regulatory action as needed.

¹ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory-overview/research-development/pharmacovigilance-research-development/eudravigilance>

² <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adl0867>

³ https://www.icmra.info/drupal/en/strategicinitiatives/vaccines/safety_statement#:~:text=Evidence%20from%20the%20more%20than,effects%20are%20mild%20and%20temporary