

## Prepare for some unpleasant side effects from COVID-19 shots

Data from early trials of several COVID-19 vaccines suggests that consumers will need to be prepared for side effects that, while technically mild, could disrupt daily life. A senior Pfizer executive [told the news outlet Stat](#) that side effects from the company's COVID-19 vaccine appear to be comparable to standard adult vaccines but worse than the company's pneumonia vaccine, [Pneumovax](#), or typical flu shots.

The two-dose Shingrix vaccine, for instance, which protects older adults against the virus that causes painful shingles, results in sore arms in 78% of recipients and muscle pain and fatigue in more than 40% of those who take it. Pneumovax and common flu shots can cause injection-site pain, aches and fever.

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"We are asking people to take a vaccine that is going to hurt," said Dr. William Schaffner, a professor of preventive medicine and health policy at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "There are lots of sore arms and substantial numbers of people who feel crummy, with headaches and muscle pain, for a day or two."

Persuading people who experience these symptoms to return in three to four weeks for a second dose — and a second round of flu-like symptoms — could be a tough sell, Schaffner said.

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