

December 24, 2020 –**MODERNA** COVID-19 Vaccine Disposal Guidance (Brookfield, WI – December 24, 2020) PharmEcology Services, WM Sustainability Services

What do we know about the vaccine?

The ingredients¹ of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine are not inherently hazardous in terms of either biohazardous risk or EPA RCRA hazardous waste designations. The ingredients include lipids (fats), salts, and sugars but **no preservatives**.

Each 0.5 mL dose of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine contains 100 mcg of nucleoside modified messenger RNA (mRNA) encoding the pre-fusion stabilized Spike glycoprotein (S) of SARS-CoV-2 virus.

This is **not a live or inactivated virus** but rather a template used to instruct the body's cells to create the spike on the corona virus which then stimulates the body to create antibodies against the virus. The vaccine cannot "give you" Covid-19 although the body's reaction when creating antibodies may cause the person to feel sick for a couple of days.

How should full or partial vaccine vials be discarded?

PharmEcology recommendation: Disposal to a non-hazardous pharmaceutical waste container is ideal. Secondly, a hazardous waste pharmaceutical container is appropriate should a non-hazardous pharmaceutical waste container be inaccessible. **Also check with your healthcare system emergency preparedness group for specific directions to assure operational conformity to policies and procedures.**

Moderna recommendation: None

How should empty vaccine vials be discarded?

PharmEcology recommendation: While empty vials (where the vaccine has been removed to the extent possible using normal practices) could be acceptable in your solid waste stream (trash), please verify with your solid waste service provider. **Also check with your healthcare system emergency preparedness group for specific directions to assure operational conformity to policies and procedures.**

Moderna recommendation: None

How should syringes with needles used to administer the vaccine be disposed?

The empty syringe with needle should be disposed in a biohazardous sharps container and managed appropriately through autoclaving, incineration, or chemical treatment.

¹ <https://www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua/eua-fact-sheet-providers.pdf>

Why are the disposal instructions less complicated than with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine?

The Moderna vaccine only needs to be kept frozen at normal freezer temperatures rather than the ultra cold temperatures required by the Pfizer vaccine. This eliminates the need for the return of the packaging contents and the disposal of dry ice.

Additional information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/moderna/index.html>

<https://www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua/providers/faq>

For more information on compliant disposal of Rx and OTC drugs, contact us today at 877-247-7430 or info@pharmecology.com.