

COVID-19 VACCINES & FETAL CELLS

DO COVID-19 VACCINES CONTAIN FETAL CELLS?

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain fetal cells. However, some COVID-19 vaccines use a historic fetal cell line in production and manufacturing.

- Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine has been produced by growing the virus in fetal cells during vaccine development and manufacturing (using PER.C6 line). Such cells were derived from a historic fetal cell line.
- Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines **do not** use a fetal cell line to produce or manufacture their vaccine. However, a fetal cell line was used in a very early phase to confirm efficacy prior to production and manufacturing.
- Novavax COVID-19 vaccines **do not** use fetal cells in development, manufacturing or production.

COVID-19 Vaccines **do not** contain fetal cells, even if a fetal cell line is used during any part of development.

WHERE DO FETAL CELL LINES COME FROM?

Cells that make up the “cell lines” used for certain COVID-19 vaccine development came from two elective pregnancy terminations that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s:

- These same cells from the ‘70s and ‘80s continue to grow in a lab as a cell line.
- Fetal cell lines are used in other medical technologies – this process is not new.

WHY ARE FETAL CELL LINES USED IN MAKING VACCINES?

Viruses that infect humans tend to grow better in cells from humans than animals. Historic cell lines can be used to grow the vaccine virus because:

- Fetal cells can divide many times and can be used longer than other cell types.
- They are stored at low temperatures, allowing a cell line to be used from decades ago.
- **Once the virus is grown, any cellular debris is removed. Vaccines do not contain fetal cells.**

HAVE FAITH ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSED THIS?

Yes, many groups developed statements and often note that individuals may morally choose to receive such vaccines. For more information, visit:

- [Michigan Catholic Bishops](#)
- [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Moral Considerations](#)
- [National Catholic Bioethics Center FAQ](#)
- [The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith](#)