

How mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Work

Understanding the virus that causes COVID-19.

Coronaviruses like the one that causes COVID-19 are named for the crown-like spikes on their surface, called **spike proteins**. These **spike proteins** are ideal targets for vaccines.

What is mRNA?

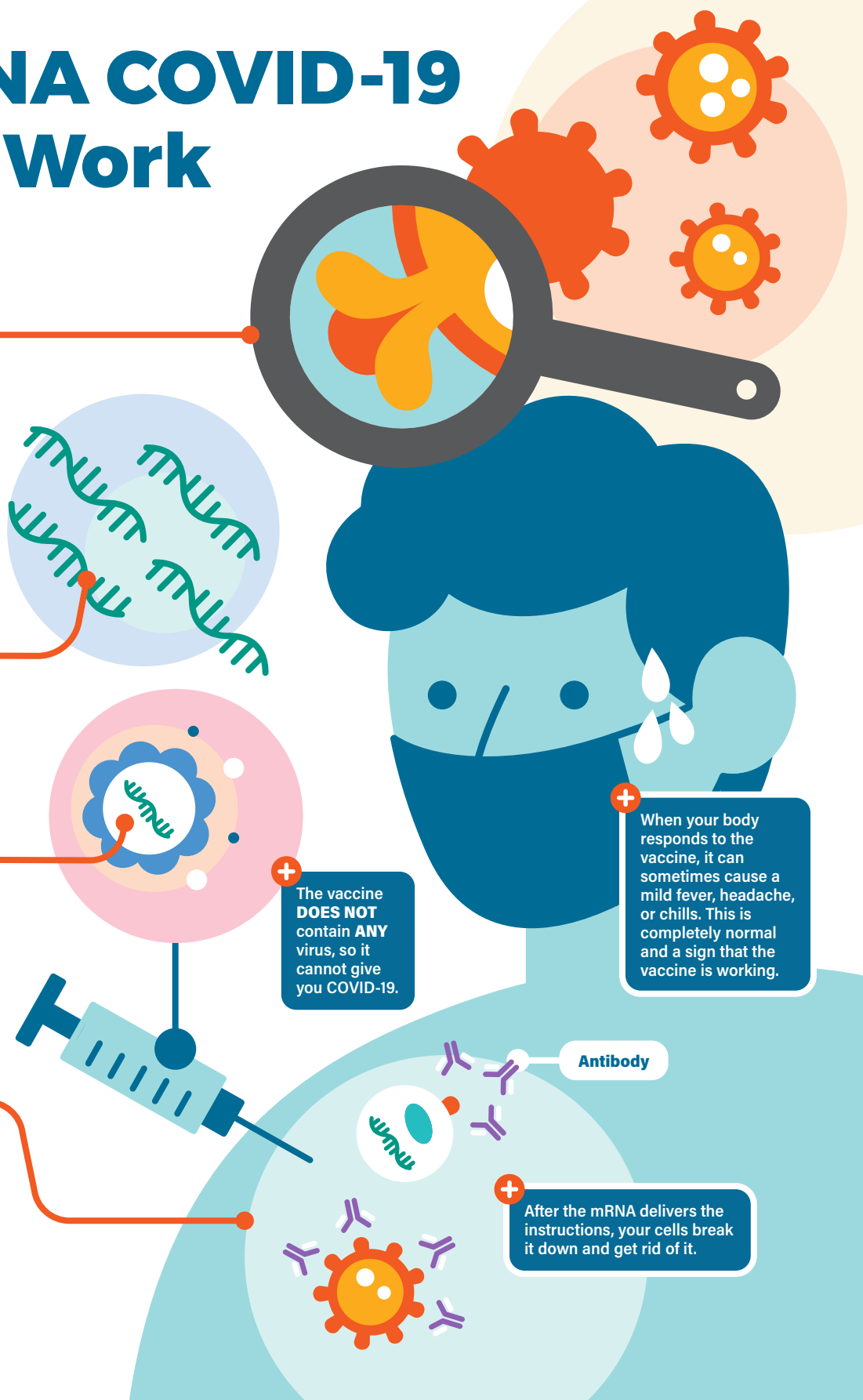
Messenger RNA, or mRNA, is genetic material that tells your body how to make proteins.

What is in the vaccine?

The vaccine is made of mRNA wrapped in a coating that makes delivery easy and keeps the body from damaging it.

How does the vaccine work?

The mRNA in the vaccine teaches your cells how to make copies of the **spike protein**. If you are exposed to the real virus later, your body will recognize it and know how to fight it off.



Getting vaccinated?

For information about COVID-19 vaccine, visit: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines)

