



### **COVID-19 Vaccine**

**Q: As we are still learning about the COVID-19 vaccine, do we have any insight as to those colleagues who are currently pregnant or plan to become pregnant?**

*A: This is an excerpt from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) updated 12/21: ACOG recommends that COVID-19 vaccines should not be withheld from pregnant individuals who meet criteria for vaccination based on ACIP-recommended priority groups.*

*COVID-19 vaccines should be offered to lactating individuals like non-lactating individuals when they meet criteria for receipt of the vaccine based on prioritization groups outlined by the ACIP.*

*We recommend that you consult with your personal physician for further clarification.*

*Source:*

<https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/practice-advisory/articles/2020/12/vaccinating-pregnant-and-lactating-patients-against-covid-19>

**Q: Are both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines safe for breastfeeding mothers?**

*A: The literature from both Pfizer and Moderna state to discuss your options with your healthcare provider if you are breastfeeding prior to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.*

**Q: Is infertility possible with this vaccine?**

*A: There's been no scientific evidence that vaccination with mRNA vaccines affect fertility. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist have stated that it's not necessary to delay pregnancy after completing both doses of COVID vaccine. It is also not necessary to get a pregnancy test prior to receiving the vaccine.*

**Q: I am highly allergic to poultry, eggs, turkey, ducks, chicken, etc. Do you know if there are any poultry products, or if the vaccines are mass produced inside of eggs?**

*A: The first two vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna, are not egg based. The other vaccines that are coming haven't been sent for approval yet, so not sure about them. More information to follow as it becomes available.*

**Q: When completing the COVID-19 vaccine survey, I am not sure which location I should select, i.e., my paying ministry or where I am primarily located?**

*A: Please mark the location where you are located to work as this will be where you would receive your vaccine.*

**Q: For those that have already tested positive for COVID, is there any practical use in getting either of the two vaccines discussed in the survey?**

*A: At this point we are going to recommend the vaccination for people who have previously tested positive, but not as one of the initial high priority groups. Due to the novel nature of this coronavirus, we do not know how long people retain immunity.*



**Q: I am a lab employee which does not have direct patient contact but do handle specimens to perform the COVID testing. Will I receive the vaccine, if available?**

*A: We have plans to offer the vaccine to all colleagues as the supply is available. Please check with your manager to see when/if the vaccine is available for you to receive.*

**Q: Once you receive the vaccine, is it necessary to wear a mask?**

*A: Yes, masks will still need to be worn even with the vaccination. The vaccine effectiveness is currently approximately 95% (Pfizer), which leaves enough risk to warrant continued mitigation measures.*

**Q: Do the COVID-19 vaccines get reported to a registry?**

*A: In Illinois, the information on those who are vaccinated goes to the state ICARE registry. In Wisconsin, the information goes to the Wisconsin Immunization Registry.*

**Q: How will we know who may have gotten the vaccine?**

*A: Since the COVID vaccine is not mandatory, we will not be requiring staff to wear any type of sticker like we do with the flu vaccine, thus we will not know who has or has not received the COVID vaccine. Also, masking will still be required even if you get the COVID vaccine.*

**Q: I have heard or have been wondering if “they” feel there will be negative long-term effects from the vaccine. I am worried that in 5 years there will be some type of issue with it.**

*A: Reasonable question. Conventional wisdom is that the risk of long term issues with the vaccine are less than the risk of getting the infection. The risks from getting the infection are important. So far more than 352,000 Americans will not be around to have theoretical side effects from a vaccine given 5 years ago.*

**Q: Can my family member get the vaccine through HSHS?**

*A: We are not offering COVID vaccine to family members currently.*

**Q: I recently had to get a tdap vaccination, how long should I wait before getting the COVID vaccine?**

*A: No need to delay unless you are immunocompromised in some way.*

**Q: Will the vaccine continue to be administered or is now my only chance to get it through HSHS free of charge?**

*A: As long as vaccine supply is available, colleagues who decline now could get vaccinated at a later date.*

**Q: If I get the vaccine and get sick or have extreme symptoms from it, will HSHS be paying the colleague for any time off due to that?**

*A: You must use PTO if available. If no PTO, unpaid time is allowed.*

**Q: Do we have to have a MyChart account to obtain the COVID vaccine?**

*A: Yes, you need to have a MyChart account in order to obtain the COVID vaccine since this is the mechanism in which the*



*vaccine is tracked.*

**Q: The information packet that is given out when receiving the vaccine states that the Moderna vaccine is “unapproved.” Can you please explain what this means in reference to the safety of giving it to people and how it can be dispensed if it is not approved?**

*A: This is not the traditional FDA approval. The COVID-19 vaccine is authorized under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The FDA requires that vaccine recipients or their caregivers are provided with certain vaccine-specific EUA information to help make an informed decision about vaccination.*

**Q: Is there an amount of time after receiving the vaccine that you must stay away from others (even pets) like with the chicken pox vaccine?**

*A: No, you are not contagious so no need to stay away from others.*

**Q: Does the first immunization give any immunity? Is the second immunization a booster or is it a two-step process?**

*A: The first immunization provides 50-60% immunity dependent upon your age. The first shot primes the immune system, helping it recognize the virus, and the second shot strengthens the immune response.*

**Q: Is the vaccine supposed to any or all of the below scenarios?**

- a. Stop you from contracting the virus
- b. Keep the symptoms minimal if you do get the virus
- c. Stop you from spreading the virus to others

*A: Both the disease and the vaccine are new. We don't know how long protection lasts for those who get infected or those who are vaccinated. What we do know is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and deaths for a lot of people. Should you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick.*

**Q: What are your thoughts of a vaccine passport? Do you see the world going to something for travel purposes?**

*A: We are beginning to see Airlines (QANTAS) planning to require proof of vaccination. Excerpt from the NY Times: It's not known yet whether some kind of universal health form or certificate will be required to travel because that would require participation from various countries and organizations, but that's happened before.*

**Q: I was COVID positive the beginning of November, how long do I need to wait before I get the vaccination, or do I even need to get it?**

*A: The length of time an infected individual remains immune is currently unknown. We still recommend that you eventually get the vaccine as long as you are not exhibiting symptoms or have any contraindications. Updated contraindications can be found on the CDC website or you may ask your primary care provider.*

**Q: How soon, if you are going to get a rash, will it show up? Will it itch? Is it progressive rash or will it show up all over at once?**

*A: Individuals with a history of severe allergic reactions to vaccines should check with their physician before getting the vaccine. Most severe allergic reactions occur within seconds or minutes after exposure, however, in rare cases reactions can occur up to 24 hours. Although rare, the Moderna vaccine fact sheet lists an “all over body rash” as a severe allergic reaction. There are no descriptors beyond location.*



**Q: If you have been taking Coumadin for years to control blood clots and your INRs are consistent, will you be able to receive the vaccine?**

A: Yes

**Q: Is there a time period I should wait to schedule a surgery after receiving the vaccine? Or does it make any difference at all?**

A: *No, it is not necessary to delay surgery after receiving the vaccine.*

**Q: I have heard recent news of an overseas COVID variant that may already be here. What does that mean for those that have received the vaccine and for those waiting to receive theirs? Should we be concerned that this will prove the current vaccine ineffective, as in putting those vaccinated into the same exposure risk as being without?**

A: *There is no data to suggest this vaccine does not cover the COVID variant.*

**Q: I have Cushing's disease for which I take 1200 mg of korlym daily and crohn's disease that I take 1000 mg of pentasa qid with these two disease processes am I still able to take the injection or will I be at risk for hyperimmune response?**

A: *Cushing's Disease and Crohn's disease have not been listed as contraindications to the vaccine, however, due to your circumstances, we recommend that you consult with your physicians prior to taking the vaccine.*

**Q: Is this vaccine mandatory for employment with HSHS? I have been hearing about healthcare workers being diagnosis with Bell's Palsy, Encephalomyelitis as a result from taking the COVID19 vaccine.**

A: *No, at this time the vaccine is highly recommended, but not mandatory.*

**Q: Will the current vaccine work to prevent the variant that is being discussed?**

A: *At this point, researchers have indicated that the variant is covered by the current vaccine.*

**Q: I heard that certain blood types are more likely to catch covid then others? like O blood types are less likely to catch covid.is that true?**

A: *There are some preliminary studies suggesting blood type may influence resistance to COVID19, but the data is limited and largely unknown.*

**Q: Any idea when the vaccines will be available to other high-risk populations?**

A: *Following Phase 1b, in which the COVID-19 vaccine is being offered to people aged 75 years and older and non-health care frontline essential workers, Phase 1c, will include people aged 65–74 years, people aged 16–64 years with high-risk medical conditions, and essential workers not included in Phase 1b. Timing is largely controlled by the distribution process and is unique to each state and municipality.*

**Q: Should individuals with eosinophilic disease take COVID vaccine?**

A: Individuals with existing conditions should consult with their physicians prior to taking the vaccine.



**Q: What was the comment on the virtual Q&A meeting with Dr. Shelton that you should or should not get the vaccine for 90 days after having COVID? I did have a positive COVID test the beginning of December and received my vaccine on the 31st. On January 1 I had a few side effects like fatigue, low grade fever, soreness which all were gone on January 2. Do I need to be worried about worse side effect on the second shot?**

*A: The most common side effects are injection site pain, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, and joint pain. Some people in the clinical trials have reported fever. Side effects are more common after the second dose; younger adults, who have more robust immune systems, reported more side effects than older adults.*

*Important to Note: These side effects are a sign of an immune system kicking into gear. They do not signal that the vaccine is unsafe. To date there are no serious, long-term side effects associated with receipt of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, which will be closely monitored as their use expands.*

**Q: Can you still spread Covid-19 after you have been vaccinated?**

*A: Yes, you can contract and spread the virus after being vaccinated, as both vaccines are 94-95% effective in fighting off COVID-19 vs. 100%.*

**Q: I was cleared of Covid-19 on 12/25/20. I still have a little cough. Is it safe for me to get the vaccine?**

*A: No, we would recommend that you wait until all symptoms have subsided before getting the vaccine.*

**Q: Is there a cutoff date that we have to get the vaccine at this time?**

*A: As long as vaccine supply is available, colleagues who decline now could get vaccinated at a later date.*

**Q: Are there any updates on "post COVID syndrome" or post COVID symptoms such as prolonged dizziness?**

*A: There is not enough research to know the long-term effects of acquiring COVID19.*

**Q: If you are a contract employee working on site at HSHS can we get the vaccine?**

*A: Yes, if a contracted employee is scheduled to work during the time from administration of first dose to the administration of second dose (21 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna) then the contract employee can get the vaccine.*



**Q: What are some resources where I can access more information?**

*A: More information can be found via these links:*

[CDC guidelines for COVID-19 vaccine](#)

[CDC guidelines for older adults](#)

[CDC guidelines on social distancing](#)

[CDC guidelines on hand washing](#)

[CDC guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting](#)

[Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity - Restore Illinois](#)

[Wisconsin Department of Health Services - COVID-19 resources](#)