



Covid-19 Vaccination FAQ's NCHC Staff

We anticipate that many staff members will have questions regarding the Covid-19 vaccinations. We do know that the vaccination is new for every healthcare provider in the United States, but the vaccination process is not. Please see below for answers to questions based on the survey results and what we anticipate receiving. If there is a question that you do not see here, please contact your supervisor and we will get answers for you.

What is an Emergency Use Authorization Vaccines process?

On December 11, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued the first emergency use authorization (EUA) for a vaccine for the prevention of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in individuals 16 years of age and older. **The emergency use authorization allows the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to be distributed in the U.S.**

At this time, we anticipate that we will receive COVID-19 Vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and will base our information on that vaccine. Moderna is another vaccine manufacturer that may also provide COVID-19 vaccines and we will provide updates to the vaccine/process as we are able.

What is a mRNA Vaccine? mRNA vaccines are a new type of vaccine to protect against infectious diseases. To trigger an immune response, many vaccines put a weakened or inactivated germ into our bodies. Not mRNA vaccines. Instead, they teach our cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

How is the Covid-19 vaccine administered?

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is administered intramuscularly as a series of two doses (0.3 mL each) 3 weeks apart.

What if another vaccine is approved? Do I need to have the same Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for my second dose? There is no data available on the interchangeability of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine with other COVID-19 vaccines to complete the vaccination series. Individuals who have received one dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine should receive a second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to complete the vaccination series.

How often do staff need to be vaccinated?

The CDC has not issued any recommendations on how often people should be vaccinated and they do not know how long immunity lasts until there is more data. Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.



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Will the vaccine be required for staff?

NCHC has developed a vaccination program policy that applies to all NCHC staff. The policy does require all staff to participate in the program however, staff can sign a declination form if they choose to not get the vaccine. We encourage all staff to get the vaccine once available.

What happens when the Covid-19 vaccine is declined?

Staff will need to continue to use the infection control practices that are currently in place. Additional education and testing may be required as well. The COVID-19 vaccine is only part of the plan to combat this pandemic. The CDC recommends that PPE is still used during the pandemic.

Are there side effects to the Covid-19 vaccination?

As with any medication, there is risk for side effects. Staff should continue to self-monitor and screen and report and potential side effects to employee health. Vaccines have less side effects than most medications and it is always appropriate with any medication to weigh the benefits versus the risks.

Adverse reactions following the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine that have been reported in the clinical trials include injection site pain, fatigue, headaches, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, fever, injection site swelling and redness, nausea, malaise, and lymphadenopathy (swollen lymph nodes).

If a staff member is ill, will they be given the Covid-19 vaccine?

Like the influenza vaccine, staff who are exhibiting sign of illness or a fever of 100.4° or greater, will not be allowed to get the vaccine. They can wait until a later date to receive the vaccine.

Is there a cost to residents to receive the vaccine?

There is no cost for the vaccine however we may obtain your insurance information to bill the insurance carrier for the administration fee if applicable.

What is the process for determining what residents/patients or staff will be eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine?

NCHC is working closely with Wisconsin DHS and will proceed using the Phase 1A Allocation approach. COVID-19 vaccinations will be available for administration to residents/patients, employees, pending availability, phased approach due to patient population. NCHC has created a phased approach to support future implementation for all healthcare staff.

Who is providing the Covid-19 vaccinations?

NCHC has partnered with Walgreens Pharmacy to administer Covid-19 vaccines to residents and staff. This is a program organized through the State of WI Department of Health Services. NCHC will be working in collaboration with our local public health to determine vaccine rationing. Walgreen's will manage all aspects of the vaccine administration for our residents and staff in our long-term care facilities. We have also received confirmation that NCHC is now approved to be our own vaccinators. We hope to collaborate with our community partners for additional phases to support all NCHC staff, but we are ready if the need does arise.



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If a staff member has already tested positive for Covid-19, do they have to get the Covid-19 vaccination?

There is not enough information currently available to say if or for how long after infection someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again; this is called natural immunity. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long, but more studies are needed to better understand this. The CDC has not issued recommendations on whether people who had COVID-19 should get a COVID-19 vaccine. NCHC recommends that all staff receive the Covid-19 vaccine.

Do staff need to continue to wear masks after they have completed both doses of the Covid-19 vaccination?

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others. There is not enough information currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people wear masks and avoid close contact with others to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Where can I find the best sources of information about the Covid-19 vaccine?

NCHC receives our recommendations from the CDC and we strongly recommend that the public do so as well. Information from other sources, including social media, may not be as up to date or accurate. Please visit the CDC's website

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/>

Additional Resources:

- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
- <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccines>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>
- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine-<https://www.cvdvaccine.com/>