COVID-19 VACCINE FAQs

Resource Document for Partner Use

Current as of December 28, 2020

About Covid-19 Vaccines:

What are the vaccine types in development?

Currently, there are three kinds of COVID-19 vaccines being developed by Operation Warp Speed:

- mRNA combined with tiny lipid particles
    - Pivotal, Phase 3 efficacy trials performed in the United States for two mRNA vaccines are complete.
- Replication incompetent virus vectors
    - Phase 3 trials for two vectored vaccines are well underway
- Protein subunit combined with oil-in-water adjuvants.
    - The protein subunit vaccines are in preparations to begin Phase 3 clinical trials as soon as possible.

None of these vaccines can give you COVID-19 since they only express a protein from the virus that allows your body's immune system to generate antibodies.

Who must verify that the vaccines are safe and can prevent COVID-19?

Both the US Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ensure the safety and efficacy of vaccines before they are recommended for use in the United States. FDA scientists and independent medical advisors carefully evaluate all the available information about the vaccine to determine its safety and effectiveness. After FDA has authorized a vaccine, CDC's independent advisory committee reviews the data before advising CDC on recommending a vaccine for use among the general public.

How can we be sure these vaccines are safe, given how quickly the vaccines are being developed and submitted for approval by the FDA?

The U.S. national vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible, and because vaccines are given to millions of healthy people to prevent serious diseases, they're held to very high safety standards.

COVID-19 vaccines are undergoing a rigorous development process that includes vaccinating tens of thousands of people who participate in a study to generate the needed clinical data. These clinical trials generate scientific data for the FDA to determine the safety and efficacy of each vaccine.

It's worth noting that the clinical studies to establish the safety and efficacy of the Covid-19 vaccines were as big and thorough as recent studies for other licensed vaccines (like for shingles).

Are there side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines/ vaccine candidates?

RESPONSE OPTION 1: The most common side effects are very similar to the side effects seen with most vaccines, such as sore arms, fevers, and tiredness within 72 hours after the vaccine. These side effects usually mean that the vaccine is working to generate an immune response, indicating that the vaccine is working.

RESPONSE OPTION 2: Short-term side effects that were observed in the leading COVID-19 vaccine trials:

- Injection site pain and redness
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches and pains
- Joint pain
- Headache

How much will the vaccines cost?

RESPONSE OPTION 1: The COVID-19 vaccines will be available to everyone in the United States at no cost to the consumer, whether you have health insurance or not.

RESPONSE OPTION 2: Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost, at least initially. However, vaccine providers will be able to charge administration fees for giving or administering the shot. Vaccine providers can get this fee administration reimbursed by the patient's public or private insurance company or, for uninsured patients, by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

Availability and Logistics:

How much of the vaccines will each state receive?

The U.S. federal government will determine the number of COVID-19 vaccines each state or jurisdiction will receive. The amount of vaccine sent to states will be based on the size of the state's 18+ population. Once a vaccine is approved for use by the FDA, states will receive limited supplies at first.

For more details on Jurisdictional plans submitted to the CDC, search **"covid19 vaccination guidance"** on CDC.gov.

Who will be vaccinated first?

Preliminary recommendations for who should receive the initial doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been made by CDC, which recommended vaccination be offered to both 1) health care personnel and 2) residents of long-term care facilities when supplies are limited.

Additional groups expected to be vaccinated later in Phase 1 include:

- Non-healthcare essential workers (i.e. food and agriculture, transportation, education, energy, police, firefighters, manufacturing, IT and communication, water and wastewater);
- Adults with underlying medical conditions that are risk factors for severe COVID-19 illness; and
- People 65 years of age or older.

What do healthcare professionals need to do to be eligible to administer COVID-19 vaccines?

To receive and administer COVID-19 vaccine and ancillary supplies, vaccination providers must enroll in the federal government COVID-19 Vaccination Program, coordinated through their jurisdiction's immunization program. Healthcare providers will be required to sign and agree to the conditions outlined in the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement. CDC will make this agreement available to each jurisdiction's immunization program for use in conducting outreach and enrolling vaccination providers. Healthcare professionals should reach out to their state health department to enroll.

How will the vaccines be shipped?

The federal government is coordinating the shipment of the vaccines and vaccination supply kits (e.g., needles, masks) to states.

What vaccine storage and handling are required for COVID-19 vaccines?

COVID-19 vaccination providers should refer to the manufacturer information for detailed storage and handling information for each vaccine. Most vaccines will be provided in 2-dose series, and some vaccine products will require special storage and handling (e.g., ultra-cold storage).

Is there training available for health care professionals on COVID-19 vaccine administration?

CDC is developing educational and training materials for health care professionals related to COVID-19 vaccine storage, handling and administration based on Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations, the ACIP General Best Practice Guidelines for Immunization, product information from vaccine manufacturers, and results of scientific studies.

What reporting requirements are required for healthcare providers who administer Covid-19 vaccines?

COVID-19 vaccination providers must document vaccine administration in their medical record systems within 24 hours of administration, and report administration data to the relevant system for the jurisdiction (i.e., IIS) no later than 72 hours after administration.

All COVID-19 vaccination providers must report COVID-19 vaccine inventory daily into VaccineFinder at www.vaccinefinder.org for free, online service that partners with clinics, pharmacies, and health departments to provide accurate and up-to-date information about vaccination services. For more information on data and reporting visit CDC.gov and search **"COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Support."**

Other Questions:

Once the first and second doses are given, can patients resume normal day-to-day social activities? Do people still need to wear masks?

After receiving the vaccine, people should still wear masks and practice social distancing. These steps will continue to ensure we can help slow the spread even after someone has been vaccinated.

How can you best prepare to address patient questions about COVID-19 vaccines?

Physicians and nurses are valuable sources of information for their patients on vaccines and are critical to vaccine acceptance. Physicians and nurses should take the time to answer questions and have conversations about the importance of vaccines in protecting the individual health of their patients as well as the health of communities.

To review answers to common patient questions, please search **"Answering Patients' Questions"** on CDC.gov.

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