

COVID-19 Vaccine Resource

Patient and Community Talking Points



The following messages can be used to help answer questions from patients and the community about the availability of the COVID-19 vaccination.

Commitment to caring

Duke Health's top priority is safety and protecting the health and well-being of our patients, their loved ones and our team members. We are committed to providing you with the facts so you can make an informed decision to receive a safe, effective COVID-19 vaccine. This is a rapidly evolving situation as more vaccines are authorized for use, and we are committed to keeping you informed with important updates.

Safety and efficacy

There are many strict protections in place and steps taken during development to ensure that any vaccine authorized for use is proven to be safe and effective. More than 70,000 people from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities volunteered to participate in clinical trials for the COVID-19 vaccination.

Equitable and efficient distribution

In close coordination with CDC, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) and local health departments, we are efficiently and equitably distributing the vaccine. In partnership with the state, we are working to help ensure that all North Carolinians have equitable access to vaccines, and vaccine planning and distribution is inclusive. The vaccine will be available to all who want it, but supplies will be limited at first.

At this time, the vaccine has not been fully studied in children and is not yet approved for people younger than 16 years old. We will update you as data on COVID-19 vaccines in children become available.

Distribution prioritization

A vaccine will be available to all who want it, but supplies will be limited at first. Duke Health is following NC DHHS guidelines for COVID-19 vaccination distribution. Independent state and federal public health advisory groups have determined that the best way to fight the spread of COVID-19 is to start with vaccinating those most at-risk for severe illness, and then expand access to vaccination to more people as the supply increases throughout 2021. Be assured, the COVID-19 vaccine will be available at the appropriate time for all who want it at no cost regardless of whether you have health insurance.

You can learn more about where you fit in the state's COVID-19 vaccine distribution timeline [here](#).

Distribution group updates

Administering this safe and effective vaccine is an important step toward ending this pandemic. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) has released an updated phased distribution plan. There are five total distribution groups. Currently, Group 1 and Group 2 are actively receiving vaccinations. Group 1 includes health care workers and long-term care staff and residents, and Group 2 includes older adults that are 65 years old or older, regardless of health status or living situation.

There are many individuals in these groups, and the supply of vaccine is limited. You do not need to be a Duke Health patient to receive the vaccine. If you have a Duke MyChart account, you may check your account often to schedule an appointment. If an appointment is not available, you can visit DukeHealth.org to join our waitlist. Our team will contact everyone on this waitlist on a first-come, first-served basis to schedule an appointment.

Or, you can call the Duke COVID-19 hotline: 919-385-0429 to make an appointment. If an appointment is unavailable, you can call the hotline to be added to the waitlist. The hotline is open every day from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. Please note that we are experiencing exceptionally high call volumes and experiencing extended wait times.

We are committed to equitably distributing vaccines to our patients, community and members of historically underserved populations. As individuals in these groups express interest in vaccination, we will place them in a queue and schedule appointments by the order in which their request was received. In accordance with the state's distribution plan, no other prioritization will occur to ensure equitable distribution.

Eligibility notification

In coordination with NC DHHS, we will contact all of our patients when they are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination. We encourage you to register for a MyChart account if you have not already for convenient communication with the Duke Health team. Visit dukemychart.org to register for your account. More information about COVID-19 vaccines and our vaccine distribution plan may be found on our website, DukeHealth.org.

Vaccination process

The development and distribution of safe COVID-19 vaccines is an exciting milestone to help us end the pandemic and return to the places and people we love. Both the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna vaccine, which have been granted emergency use authorization, require two doses. After receiving either of these vaccines, you will need to wait under observation for a short period of time. When you come for your vaccination, you will get a printed card and schedule a follow-up appointment for your second dose – 3-4 weeks later.

These authorized vaccines will not give you COVID-19. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development or in use in the United States, contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. You may have temporary reactions like a sore arm, headache or feeling tired and achy for a day or two after receiving either dose of the vaccine.

One more way to stay safe

Safe, tested and effective – the COVID-19 vaccine is one more way to stay healthy. "One more way" is Duke Health's campaign to encourage everyone to do what they can to prevent the spread of infection regardless of where they fall in the distribution plan to help keep themselves and others safe. We understand that some people may have hesitations about getting vaccinated for COVID-19 and supplies are currently limited, and we know that stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available. Getting vaccinated and following other simple healthy behaviors like wearing a mask and washing your hands is the best way to stay healthy.

Remain vigilant

Continue to practice the 3 Ws. Wear a mask. Wait 6 feet apart. Wash your hands. These are small steps that make a big difference to fight this disease until the vaccine is more widely available.

Thank you

We appreciate your understanding, and we want to ensure you that the safety of everyone is our top priority. Especially during these challenging times, thank you for your commitment to preventing the spread of infection in our community.