

Beaumont

COVID-19 Vaccine

Questions and Answers

Questions regarding the COVID-19 vaccine will be regularly shared through the Daily Update and posted on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Information page](#). This section will be updated often with new questions as well as revised answers to previous questions when new information becomes available.

Beaumont Health followed CDC and MDHHS guidelines regarding vaccination scheduling. Please know that all Beaumont team members received invitations to take the vaccine and are encouraged to make an appointment. Please refer to [these instructions](#) if you need help scheduling your appointment.

- If you did not receive your invitation and think you should have, please click this link: <https://secure.beaumont.org/covidvaccineappointment>.
- To reschedule your first or second dose, login to your [myBeaumontChart](#) > click on Appointments> Click on the first dose appointment and select Reschedule appointment.
- Beaumont has also expanded its COVID-19 telephone line (800-592-4784) for established Beaumont patients (people who have had a health care visit with Beaumont during the last three years). The call center staff will help individuals who do not have computer access schedule their vaccine appointments online. Call center hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Will Beaumont Health offer opportunities for family members and the community to get vaccinated?

Once we have approval from the State of Michigan to offer vaccines to our community and patients, we will do so! Currently, we are vaccinating employees, affiliates and the public aged 65 and over. Our plan is to send patients to clinics we'll set up near/on some of our acute care campuses, including Beaumont, Dearborn and Beaumont, Troy. We're finding larger clinics are much more efficient in our efforts to get large numbers of our community vaccinated quickly. Check out [this helpful graphic](#) from the State of Michigan, so you can see the vaccination timeline.

Will Beaumont mandate the vaccine for employees?

Not at this point.

If you opt out of getting the vaccine and you come down with COVID-19, do you still qualify for the COVID-19 leave? For example, if you aren't comfortable getting it or if you have a medical condition that prohibits you from getting it.

Presently, the COVID-19 vaccination is only approved for use under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). Under this EUA, health systems cannot require their employees to get the vaccination as many do with other vaccinations such as the flu. Until we have more information regarding FDA approval and Beaumont's strategy with respect to requiring vaccination for employees, we will continue our current

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policy and procedures related to covering wages for the first five days of illness prior to picking up short-term disability or worker's compensation.

I have specific medical issues. What resources are available to get my questions answered?

We understand that getting vaccinated is a very personal choice. Many questions were submitted through email and Ask a Leader regarding specific medical conditions or medications. Your primary care provider knows you best. So, we ask that you please reach out to your own doctor with questions specific to your needs.

The vaccine

How does the mRNA vaccine work?

The mRNA vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna 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 COVID-19 virus enters our bodies.

Not all manufacturers are creating mRNA vaccines.

What are the common side effects of the vaccine?

The most common side effects that have been reported with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine include:

- Injection site pain
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Joint pain
- Fever
- Injection site swelling
- Injection site redness
- Nausea
- Feeling unwell
- Swollen lymph nodes

There is a remote chance that the vaccine could cause a severe allergic reaction. This will typically occur shortly after receiving a dose of the vaccine. Signs of a severe allergic reaction include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of your face and throat
- A fast heartbeat
- A bad rash all over your body
- Dizziness or weakness

This vaccine is still being studied in clinical trials. Serious and unexpected side effects may occur.

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Many people are experiencing mild side effects after getting vaccinated, like fatigue or soreness at the injection site. However, if you experience any major side effects, please talk with your physician and report your side effects to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) (for help, email info@VAERS.org or call 800-822-7967). Employees can also call the Employee Hotline at 947-522-3466 and select option 2.

What are the side effects of the second dose?

Based on the study data, some individuals may have somewhat increased symptoms with the second dose compared with the first. These symptoms should still be manageable with simple over-the-counter interventions such as ibuprofen.

Why did I need to get two doses of the vaccine? What happens if I don't get my second shot?

There are some viruses and bacteria that we vaccinate against that one dose of the vaccine just doesn't provide full immunity to prevent illness if you were to be exposed to it. Priming the system allows your immune system to react to it once, create some memory and, when exposed to it a second time, really develop that full, long-term memory.

Is the vaccine preservative free?

Both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are preservative free and do not contain Thimerosal.

Will employees be able to choose which vaccine they receive?

No. At this time, the State of Michigan told Beaumont we will continue to get Pfizer vaccines. Moderna vaccines will be directed to long-term care facilities because it doesn't need to be stored at the temperatures Pfizer does, so it's easier for them to handle. Please know the efficacy of Pfizer and Moderna is equivalent and we encourage you to get the Pfizer vaccine we have available.

I've read articles that it's very possible to develop COVID-19 symptoms after receiving the vaccine. If we develop COVID-19 symptoms directly from receiving the vaccine, will we have to take off work? If so, how long would we have to take off of work?

Symptoms potentially indicating COVID-19 need to be reported through Employee Health & Safety. The team there will review each case and provide instruction.

I understand that the new vaccine is designed to affect the RNA and it is not a small dose of the virus like the regular flu shot. How does this type of vaccine give you symptoms of COVID-19 if there is no virus in the vaccine?

The mRNA vaccines are comprised of mRNA encased within lipid nanoparticles. The reactions that are observed are consistent with our immune system recognizing and reacting to the vaccine (both the specific components of the vaccine and the proteins that are formed from the mRNA to stimulate the immune system to protect us from the virus that causes COVID-19). Although some of the reactions are similar to some COVID-19 signs and symptoms, the reactions are also similar to reactions one might have with other vaccines.

If someone is vaccinated, can they still be a carrier of COVID-19 and bring it into their household?

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We are hopeful that vaccinated individuals will be less likely to carry the virus that causes COVID-19; however, additional studies are needed to confirm.

Will this be a once a year vaccine or once you have both doses will it be for life?

We don't yet know how long the protection from the vaccine will last. Once more data is available, we will be able to determine how frequently we will need booster vaccine doses.

How long after administration of the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine can we consider it to be fully effective?

Protection begins building soon after the first dose, and studies suggest maximum protection from the Pfizer vaccine begins about one week after the second dose.

I understand that the COVID-19 vaccine is the first mRNA approved vaccine in the U.S., but that they have been researching MRNA vaccines for decades. I would like to get vaccinated, but I would like to know first why none of the other MRNA vaccines have been approved, but this one has.

We are fortunate that recent advances over the past few years allowed this technology to be immediately utilized to rapidly develop COVID-19 vaccines with very promising efficacy results without compromising safety. For example, the lipid nanoparticle (LNP) carrier, essential for efficient delivery of the mRNA, were FDA approved only a couple years ago. Additional vaccines for rabies, Zika and influenza remain under development and it is likely we will see other mRNA vaccines approved in the near future.

When do you expect vaccines will be distributed to BMG doctor offices to administer to their general patient population? I am not inquiring about employees of the clinic.

We'll likely send BMG patients to clinics that we'll set up near/ on some of our acute care campuses. We're finding that larger clinics are much more efficient in our efforts to get large numbers of our community vaccinated quickly.

I saw that there is no cost for the vaccine itself, but will insurance be billed an administration fee for the public? Patients who do not have medical insurance can get the vaccine free of charge, but will the administration fee be waived as well?

There will be no billing directly to the patient for COVID-19 vaccine administration. Beaumont will bill the insurance providers for the administration fee, but if the patient does not have insurance, the vaccine will be given at no cost.

How soon if/after FDA approves vaccines manufactured by AstraZeneca and Johnson and Johnson will arrive at Beaumont?

We don't know. However, experience with Pfizer and Moderna would suggest vaccines get to vaccination sites within about a week after full approval. We also don't know whether Beaumont would receive any new vaccine as we're dependent on what the state sends us, and they may keep supplying us Pfizer and Moderna for consistency in our clinics.

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Safety

For those of us who have had a previous reaction to an injectable, when will we be rescheduled at another location?

We appreciate your patience as we continue to work on a process to provide shots at Beaumont, Royal Oak. Invitations have been extended to employees who have experienced anaphylaxis in the past, but the list is long. We appreciate your patience as invitations go out.

I just want to be sure if I pass up my first opportunity due to a health concern, I still can get vaccinated later.

Beaumont is very supportive of COVID-19 vaccination based on the data available regarding safety and efficacy and recommends that all employees become vaccinated against COVID-19. We want our team to get vaccinated, so we will offer vaccination when vaccines are available and when you're comfortable consenting to the vaccine.

Will we be given an opportunity to be antibody tested after our second dose of COVID-19 vaccine to see if we have developed the antibodies?

Yes, your provider can order an antibody test. Beaumont is applying for a study that will test a certain number of people after the second vaccine to check for antibody status. In the clinical trial, virtually all participants developed antibodies.

Who gets the vaccine?

What if you're asymptomatic and don't know you're COVID-19 positive and you receive the vaccine? What will happen?

CDC is recommending even those who have had COVID-19 and have antibodies receive the vaccine, so this is not a problem. However, we ask you wait 90 days after the first onset of symptoms to schedule your first vaccination.

Will someone who has antibodies, or tests positive for antibodies in the serology study, get the vaccine?

According to the CDC, 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 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices makes recommendations to the CDC on how to best use COVID-19 vaccines, and at this time, the guidelines recommend that individuals who have had COVID-19 still get the vaccine, but are a lower priority than others who haven't had COVID.

If we had a positive COVID-19 test but developed no antibodies, can we receive the vaccination?

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At this time, the guidelines recommend that individuals who have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days still get the vaccine but are a lower priority than others who haven't had COVID-19. So yes, those who have had a positive COVID-19 test are still eligible, albeit in a lower prioritization if within the last 90 days.

Who should not receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

There are very few individuals who cannot receive the COVID-19 vaccine. If in doubt, rather than withholding vaccination, seek advice from your primary care physician, relevant specialist or immunization team right away. Beaumont will follow guidance issued by the CDC and FDA to identify individuals who should not receive the vaccine.

Minor illnesses without fever or systemic upset are not valid reasons to postpone immunization. People currently sick and experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should not receive the vaccination until they recover.

Is there any research pertaining to the COVID-19 vaccine and its effects on pregnant women and their unborn child? Is it safe for pregnant women to receive the vaccine?

The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine strongly recommends vaccination and inclusion in vaccine trials, and as the leading professional society focused on pregnancy, this is a course we strongly support.

Despite the stated commitment of the Department of Health and Human Services, NIH and CDC to prioritize the inclusion of pregnant and lactating women in SARS-CoV-2 vaccination trials, review of the clinical trials registry indicate pregnant women are being systematically excluded from vaccine Phase III trials. Vaccine research data is currently, therefore, absent for pregnancy and lactation.

Make sure to discuss this with your OB-GYN if you have pregnancy or reproductive concerns. And remember, you are at risk for contracting COVID-19, just like everyone else, so please adhere to the measures that are known to work such as social distancing, wearing a mask and frequent hand washing.

Despite the absence of research data, vaccination is strongly recommended in pregnancy. This is because pregnant women in general appear to be at higher risk of complications if they contract COVID-19 than the general population.

What is Beaumont recommending for those who are looking to be pregnant at some point? Is the vaccine safe to take?

The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination appear to greatly exceed the theoretical risks, so our professional societies are recommending vaccination. Women of childbearing age are over-represented, compared to other fields, in the health care industry. A high percentage of pregnancies are unplanned, so getting the vaccination will reduce your risk of getting COVID-19 and suffering severe complications if you do become pregnant.

Regarding vaccine safety, the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines use mRNA, which makes a protein fragment that induces immunity in the vaccinated individual. So, the risk to the fetus and pregnancy is thought to be low, compared to using an intact, replicating virus for the vaccination.

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There is no evidence regarding the effect of vaccine on reproductive health. Other vaccinations against respiratory viral infections, such as influenza, do not suggest a negative effect on reproductive health from vaccination.

There was an initial concern that getting COVID-19 increases the risk of miscarriage, however, subsequent evidence does not appear to support this.

Is race or ethnicity a factor in what vaccine I should receive?

Both vaccines appear to be equally effective at this time based on the studies, which looked at between 30,000 and 40,000 patients for each vaccine. They did look at the subgroups based on race and ethnicity and (recognizing that there were fewer people in these subgroups) both vaccines appeared to be equally good across all racial and ethnic groups.

The differences currently seen between the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are based on very small numbers of people and as such cannot be said to be meaningful at this time. As noted, the suggestion at this time based on all available current data is to get whichever of the two vaccines is available to you first.

Can I receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I've recently been vaccinated against other illnesses such as chicken pox or influenza?

Currently, the CDC recommends waiting 14 days between vaccinations for other illnesses.

Why does the questionnaire ask if you are taking a blood thinner and why did it not let me register to get my COVID-19 vaccine?

Taking blood thinners is a relative contraindication to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine due to an increased risk of bleeding with an injection in the muscle. As we started the vaccination program, we wanted to exclude people who may be at increased risk of a complication until we gained experience with the vaccine. We will offer vaccine to patients with blood thinners once we gain more experience. Patients on Warfarin will need to have their INR levels documented in the normal range.

What is the length of time someone should wait to have surgery after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

There is insufficient data to support a need to delay surgery after immunization; however, given the potential side effects from the vaccine, waiting a few days is reasonable. Since it takes approximately two weeks after the second dose to allow immunity to fully develop against COVID-19, waiting that period of time for elective surgeries is also reasonable. Urgent or emergent surgeries should not be delayed because of the vaccine.

If you receive the first COVID-19 vaccine dose and test positive afterward, should you get the second dose?

Yes, it is likely that you were infected with COVID prior to or shortly after your first COVID-19 vaccine. Receiving the second vaccine will increase your immunity. You should wait to receive the second COVID-19 vaccine if you have COVID-related symptoms until the symptoms resolve.

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My husband and college student daughters have confirmed their *myBeaumontChart* emails, how will you know that they are all eligible in the next round to send them an invitation to sign up for their COVID vaccines?

Beaumont is waiting for further direction from the State of Michigan regarding next potential eligible groups. Until we get that clarity, we cannot confirm eligibility. We are committed to transparent communication as soon as we get direction.

Scheduling

If I receive an invitation to schedule and cannot, or choose not to, schedule it right away, will I be able to later?

Yes! Your invitation and access code (if you have one) do not expire.

How do I schedule my second dose?

Scheduling your second-dose appointment will happen in the vaccine clinic when your first dose is administered. You will leave the vaccination clinic with your second-dose appointment.

Where is the vaccine being administered?

In the initial phase, it is being administered at the Beaumont Service Center in Southfield.

Regarding COVID-19 vaccine availability. What happens if after the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine, Beaumont no longer has the same vaccine, instead has Moderna in stock for the second dose. Is that still going to be safe and effective to have one dose of one and the second dose of a different one?

Please know that everyone will get the second dose and the same brand (e.g. Pfizer). The CDC and State of Michigan are “holding back” second doses for all who have gotten the first vaccine and will send it to Beaumont Health as needed based on the timing of first and second doses.

When will the COVID-19 vaccine be administered at hospital sites?

We understand the desire to have clinics at our campuses. At this point, we’re adding a second clinic at the Beaumont Service Center as we can leverage staff already in the first clinic and offer over 3,200 vaccines per day. The safety and efficiency of these large clinics at the Beaumont Service Center are allowing us to get more people vaccinated faster, which is best for public health. We hope to add additional sites over the next few weeks. Please know that people getting vaccinated in the central clinic are very complimentary of how safe and efficient it runs.

Misc.

Is there any opportunity to give vaccines? I can help on my days off.

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We need clinical staff to do injections and post-vaccine observation, and non-clinical staff to help with registration, scheduling and wayfinding. You will be paid for the time you work in the clinic. So far, those team members who have volunteered have been an enormous help and have reported truly enjoying being a part of this major milestone in ending the pandemic.

If you are interested in helping in the clinic, please follow the steps outlined in the [BH Vaccine Clinic Staffing Resources & Reminders](#) document.

The Vaccine Clinic is located at the Beaumont Service Center in Southfield. Shifts are currently available Monday to Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday hours vary. Shifts are four hours. You may sign up for more than one shift in a day.

After you're signed up to help, please check the schedule frequently to make sure your shift is still on the schedule, due to vaccine availability.

Is there a script for us regarding the COVID-19 vaccine for patients? Where do we direct their questions?

We are encouraged that patients and employees/providers want the vaccine. Please have them check Beaumont.org for additional information.

Can you give a blood donation after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine? Do you need to wait a specific number of days after receiving the vaccine?

At this time, the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines (mRNA types) do not require a deferral for blood donation. However, Versiti asks potential donors to wait 48 hours after receiving a COVID vaccination to donate blood.

I might have misplaced my vaccination card after receiving the first dose. But I did take a picture of it with my cell phone while waiting in the observation room. Can I use this picture as my vaccination card?

Yes, a photo of the card is fine. When you get the second vaccine, they will give you another card.