



CGH COVID-19 Vaccination Plan for the Public/FAQs

1/22/21

The COVID-19 vaccine is coming! We are excited and hopeful that the coronavirus vaccine will be widely available soon! We are working closely with the Whiteside County Health Department and hope to get you vaccinated as soon as possible. Below is a list of common, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that we have received about the vaccine:

I've heard about a "COVID Vaccine Waitlist". What is it? Why was it established? Who is currently being added to the waitlist?

Until the vaccine becomes widely available, the State of Illinois, through local county health departments, is controlling the distribution of the vaccine. CGH will be allocated some vaccine for us to immunize our patients, but we do not know exactly how many. With the supply limited, we are following the guidelines that have been established by the CDC and IDPH in terms of determining the priority for vaccination.

- Currently, CGH will only be adding patients of CGH and age 65 and older to our waitlist.

Registering for our waitlist DOES NOT mean you have an immediate appointment (as the vaccine supply is limited everywhere), but it does put you on our "waitlist" that will help us to more efficiently schedule a vaccination appointment for you.

Should I continue to seek out other opportunities to receive the vaccine?

Yes. At a minimum, contact your local health department. As stated above, currently the distribution of the vaccine is under the control of the State of Illinois and the local health departments. We encourage you to get the vaccine where it is first available to you. In some cases, that may be from your local county health department.

Local pharmacies such as Walgreens and CVS are expected to receive vaccine sometime as well. At this point, we have no information about if/when that would happen.

What will be the process of getting the vaccine from CGH?

Once we know we will have a vaccine supply, we will work off of our waitlist and you will be notified. The waitlist will be separated into three age groups: 86 and older, 75-85 years old and 65-74. We will schedule appointments for those who are the oldest and work our way down by age. *(Please note: if a patient is 86 and their spouse is over 65, both would be allowed to schedule at the same time.)*

CGH vaccines are currently being given in the Ryberg Auditorium at the hospital. The whole process shouldn't take very long. You will need to check in, and your information will be verified. You will be shown to a vaccination station that is staffed by CGH nurses. After the vaccine is given, you will need to be observed for 15 minutes (30 minutes in special circumstances). More specific instructions will be given at the time your appointment is scheduled.

Which vaccine will I be receiving? How many doses will I need?

Currently, there are two companies producing the vaccine: Pfizer and Moderna. Johnson & Johnson has a vaccine that may be approved soon. More than likely, you will be receiving the Moderna vaccine that is a two-part vaccine given roughly 28 days apart.

If I receive the Moderna vaccine for my first injection, can I get the Pfizer vaccine for the second?

No. Both doses must be from the same brand. We will schedule you for your second injection at the time of your initial vaccination so PLEASE BRING YOUR CALENDAR.

What are the side effects to the vaccine?

Mild side effects are common and may include: soreness in the arm receiving the injection, muscle aches, fevers, chills, headaches and fatigue. These usually are an indication that your immune response is working. SEVERE side effects, thankfully, are NOT COMMON.

The growing experience with the vaccine is showing that the older you are, the less side effects you tend to have (one of the few advantages to being older!). Concerns about side effects are valid but please balance that with the risk of COVID itself.

Should I take Ibuprofen or Tylenol before or after I get the vaccine?

We do not recommend taking ibuprofen or Tylenol before getting the vaccine. However, for mild symptoms, if needed, you may take them afterward.

How much will the vaccine cost?

Your insurance will be billed for the administration, but not for the vaccine itself. The vaccine is free of charge. You may receive an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) stating you have an out-of-pocket expense, but you should not be billed for this. If for some reason you do receive a bill, please contact the business office and we will take care of it.

If I had COVID in the past or tested positive previously, can I still get the vaccine?

Yes, if you have recovered and have been released from quarantine (at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms).

If I'm allergic to the flu vaccine, can I still get the COVID vaccine?

Yes. But you will need to be observed for 30 minutes following.

If I have a history of anaphylaxis or other severe allergies and carry an Epi-Pen with me, can I still get the vaccine?

Yes, but you will need to be observed for 30 minutes following. Please bring your Epi-Pen with you.

If I have an allergy to antibiotics, can I still get the vaccine?

Yes. If it was a severe reaction in the past, you will need to be observed for 30 minutes afterward.

If I am currently taking antibiotics, can I still get the vaccine?

Yes, as long as you do not have symptoms of COVID. Please speak with your physician or health care provider first if you have any questions.

I recently got my shingles or pneumonia vaccine. Can I get the COVID vaccine now?

Yes, as long as it has been 14 days since you received any other vaccine.

If I don't live in Whiteside County, can I still get the vaccine through CGH?

Yes, if you are a CGH patient. Again, we encourage you to contact your local county health department as well.

If I am an essential worker, can I get my vaccine at CGH?

No. At this time, the Whiteside County Health Department will be vaccinating essential workers.

We strive to do our best for you every day. This whole pandemic has been difficult for everyone and we appreciate your patience and support. Keeping you healthy is our primary concern. Please let us know if you have any other questions or concerns. With the COVID vaccine, we hope to see an end to this historic pandemic.

Thank you for your help!

