

Moore County COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine first and what are the priority phases for vaccination beyond that?

A: Because the current supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States is limited, initial supplies of COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to healthcare personnel providing direct COVID-19 care and long-term care facility residents and staff.

Currently vaccination phases are as follows:

Phase 1A: Health care workers fighting COVID-19 & Long-Term Care staff and residents.

- *Health care workers caring for and working directly with patients with COVID-19, including staff responsible for cleaning and maintenance in those areas*
- *Health care workers administering vaccine*
- *Long-term care staff and residents—people in skilled nursing facilities and in adult, family and group homes.*

Phase 1b: Adults 75 years or older and frontline essential workers.

There is not enough vaccine for everyone in this phase to be vaccinated at the same time. Vaccinations will be available to groups in the following order.

- *Group 1: Anyone 75 years or older, regardless of health status or living situation*
- *Group 2: Health care workers and frontline essential workers 50 years or older*
The CDC defines frontline essential workers as first responders (e.g., firefighters and police officers), corrections officers, food and agricultural workers, U.S. Postal Service workers, manufacturing workers, grocery store workers, public transit workers, and those who work in the education sector (teachers and support staff members) as well as child care workers.
- *Group 3: Health care workers and frontline essential workers of any age*

Phase 2: Adults at high risk for exposure and at increased risk of severe illness.

Vaccinations will happen by group in the following order:

- *Group 1: Anyone 65-74 years old, regardless of health status or living situation*
- *Group 2: Anyone 16-64 years old with high-risk medical conditions that increase risk of severe disease from COVID such as cancer, COPD, serious heart conditions, sickle cell disease, Type 2 diabetes, among others, regardless of living situation*
- *Group 3: Anyone who is incarcerated or living in other close group living settings who is not already vaccinated due to age, medical condition or job function.*
- *Group 4: Essential workers not yet vaccinated.*
The CDC defines these as workers in transportation and logistics, water and wastewater, food service, shelter and housing (e.g., construction), finance (e.g., bank tellers), information technology and communications, energy, legal, media, and public safety (e.g., engineers), and public health workers.

Phase 3: Students

- *College and university students*
- *K-12 students age 16 and over. Younger children will only be vaccinated when the vaccine is approved for them.*

Phase 4: Everyone who wants a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination

Q: When and how will I be notified that I am eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: If you are an employee of or affiliated with one of the designated priority groups, you may be notified by your employer or facility administrator once the vaccine is available. As vaccine supply increases and North Carolina progresses through the priority phases for vaccination, groups/persons who are eligible will be notified by way of announcements through State and local media outlets. www.YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov is updated regularly with information about who can currently get vaccinated. You can also find updates and announcements on the Moore County Health Department website at www.moorecountync.gov/health. Information will also be posted to the Health Department's Facebook (Moore County Health Department) and Twitter (@mocohealth) feeds. You may also talk with your health care provider or employer about where your spot is based on your health and job status. How quickly North Carolina moves through each phase will depend on the available vaccine supply. Currently, supplies are very limited. The federal government notifies states weekly of how much vaccine they will receive. We find out the week before how many doses of each vaccine we will receive for the following week. This makes it difficult to know when we will move to the next phase.

Being that progression through the phases is dependent on vaccine supply, no solid dates have been set for when each phase will begin. Currently, the best guess on that timeline is as follows:

Phase 1a: Begins December 2020

Phase 1b: Early 2021

Phase 2: Early 2021

Phase 3: Early 2021/Spring 2021

Phase 4: Spring 2021

Q: Which chronic conditions are considered to put someone at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, making them a higher priority for vaccination?

A: The CDC defines the chronic medical conditions that put someone at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Currently, the list includes cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), heart conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies), immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant, pregnancy, sickle cell disease, smoking, and type 2 diabetes mellitus. This list of conditions may be updated by the CDC and can be found [here](#).

Q: Where will I get vaccinated?

A: Currently, vaccines are being sent to providers in North Carolina based on their ability to reach prioritized populations. Health care workers at highest risk for COVID-19 exposure and long-term care staff and residents are being vaccinated in hospitals, local health departments, or at their long-term care facilities. As vaccines become more widely available, vaccinations will be offered to everyone who wants one in clinics and pharmacies, as well as vaccination events in communities. We will continue to expand the available sites so that people have a spot where they can easily get their vaccine. When more vaccine is available, we will include information on where to take your shot against COVID-19 at www.YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov. Your health care provider will also be able to help you find where to take your shot against COVID-19.

Q: Will there be enough vaccine for everyone?

A: Yes, even though there is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, supply will increase in the weeks and months to come. The goal is for everyone to be able to easily get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as large enough quantities are available. Once vaccine is widely available, the plan is to have several thousand vaccination providers offering COVID-19 vaccines in doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers.

Q: When will Moore County receive its first shipment of COVID-19 vaccine?

A: FirstHealth of the Carolinas should receive the first shipment of vaccine the week of December 14th, 2020. Shipments should arrive weekly after that. Initial shipments will go toward vaccinating all healthcare personnel providing direct COVID-19 care.

Q: When will the vaccine be available for the general public?

A: As more vaccines become available, vaccinations will be offered to everyone who wants one, including in clinics and drug stores, as well as at vaccination events in various Moore County communities. This will happen when vaccine is in adequate supply and after priority groups have been vaccinated first, which will most likely be around Spring of 2021.

Q: Do I have to get vaccinated? Is it mandated?

A: No. Getting vaccinated is voluntary and North Carolina has no plan to require people to be vaccinated against COVID-19. However, it is possible that some employers or schools may require vaccines for their employees or students.

Q: Can children receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Children will not receive vaccines until clinical trials are completed to ensure the vaccines are safe and work to prevent COVID illness in children. The Pfizer vaccine can be given to teenagers 16 years old and up now, and they are doing additional studies with children 12 and over.

Q: Should pregnant women get the vaccine?

A: Pregnant and breastfeeding women may choose to receive the Pfizer COVID vaccine. Pregnant women should talk with their doctors before making the choice. You do not need to take a pregnancy test before you get your vaccine. Women who are breastfeeding may also choose to get vaccinated. The vaccine is not thought to be a risk to a baby who is breastfeeding.

Q: How will staff and residents of long-term care facilities be vaccinated?

A: The federal government manages vaccinations for most staff and residents of long-term care facilities. Long-term care facilities include skilled nursing facilities and adult care homes. The federal government has created the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program with CVS and Walgreens to work with long-term care facilities to give vaccinations.

Q: Is the vaccine safe?

A: The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. CDC has developed a new tool, [v-safe](#), as an additional layer of safety monitoring to increase the ability to rapidly detect any safety issues with COVID-19 vaccines. V-safe is a new smartphone-based, after-vaccination health checker for people who receive COVID-19 vaccines.

Q: How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

A: There is no COVID-19 in the vaccines. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines give your body instructions to make a kind of protein. This protein safely teaches your body into thinking the virus is attacking. Your body then strengthens itself to fight off the real COVID-19 if it ever tries to attack you. Your body gets rid of the small protein naturally and quickly.

Q: How many doses of the vaccine are necessary to provide protection against COVID-19?

A: You need 2 doses of the currently available COVID-19 vaccine. A second shot 3-4 weeks after your first shot is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer. You need two doses to build up strong immunity. Additionally, it is important to get two doses of the same vaccine.

Q: If 2 shots are necessary, how will people know when to get the second?

A: North Carolina will use a secure data system called the COVID-19 Vaccine Management System (CVMS) to make sure you are safe and get your second shot at the right time. When a person gets the first shot, they get information on when to come back for the second and they are asked to make a second appointment. People will also be given a card with information about which vaccine they got for their first dose and the date of that shot. They will receive an email notification with reminders for the second shot. The provider who gave the vaccine may also help with reminders for the second one. State and federal privacy laws make sure none of your private information will be shared. The shot you take and when you need the second is confidential health information that is carefully managed to protect your privacy.

Q: Does the vaccine have any side effects?

A: No serious side effects have been reported. But people have reported temporary reactions like sore arms, tiredness, and feeling off for a day or two after receiving the vaccine. These temporary reactions were more common after the second vaccine dose. These side effects are a normal sign that your body is building protection against the virus.

Q: Is there a risk of allergic reaction to the vaccine?

A: People who have had severe allergic reactions, also called anaphylaxis, to any ingredient in the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines should not receive that vaccine. People who have had this type of severe allergic reaction to any vaccine or treatment that is injected should talk with their health care provider about balancing the risks and benefits of vaccination. People with allergies to foods, animals, environmental triggers (such as pollen), latex, or medications taken by mouth, or who have family members with past severe allergic reactions, can be vaccinated with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. Vaccine providers will watch patients for 15-30 minutes after vaccination to ensure the patient's safety. Additional information can be found [here](#) for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Q: What are the differences between the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines?

A: The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines work the same way to prevent people from getting COVID-19. In addition, both vaccines require two doses. And both are very effective in preventing someone from getting COVID-19 and had no serious safety concerns noted in the clinical trials. The vaccines are stored differently. The Moderna vaccine does not need to be stored as cold as the Pfizer vaccine, so more providers will be able to easily use it. While both vaccines require two doses, the time between doses is different. The Moderna vaccine doses are given 4 weeks apart. The Pfizer vaccine doses are given 3 weeks apart. Who can get the vaccine is also different. The Moderna vaccine is authorized for adults aged 18 and older. The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for people aged 16 and older. The temporary reactions are similar for both vaccines. Temporary reactions may include a sore arm, headache, and feeling tired and achy for a day or two after receiving the vaccine. More people who were in the Moderna clinical trial experienced these temporary reactions. The reactions are more common after the second dose than the first dose. Younger people are more likely to have reactions than older people. Neither vaccine can give you COVID-19.

Q: Will COVID-19 vaccinations be free?

A: Yes, they are free to everyone, even if you don't have health insurance. The federal government is covering the cost.

Q: Will I need to register to get vaccinated?

A: For people in the first group (Phase 1a), your health care employer, local health department, or long-term care facility will register you for the vaccine. You should follow the instructions they give to you. At this time, you may be registered through your employer for Phase 1a, you can also schedule at a site providing vaccinations to get registered when it is your turn in the prioritization groups. Soon people may be able to register themselves for vaccinations through the COVID-19 Vaccine Management System.

FirstHealth's primary care clinics and Pinehurst Medical Clinic are currently calling their 75-year-old and older patient population to schedule them for vaccination clinics that begin on Tuesday, January 12 and will run every Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the month of January. The vaccination clinics will be held at the Fair Barn in Pinehurst.

Those eligible in Phase 1B are required to have an appointment to receive the vaccine. FirstHealth vaccination clinics are only for patients who have scheduled appointments. Due to volume and vaccine availability, FirstHealth's vaccine clinics will not be able to accommodate walk-ins. Patients are encouraged to wait to be contacted by their primary care

physician's office. Patients will be scheduled for their second dose of the vaccine after they receive their first dose at the Fair Barn location. FirstHealth will continue coordination of vaccination clinics with other primary care clinics in Moore County for their patients age 75 years old or older in the coming weeks.

The Moore County Health Department will pre-register eligible individuals for vaccine clinics through a portal available on the [Health Department website](#), the Moore County Government website and over the phone. All persons who are 75 years or older who may be uninsured, or do not have a primary care physician or medical home, may pre-register online at www.moorecountync.gov/shot or call (910) 947-SHOT (7468). The online portal and phone line will go live at 1 p.m. on Friday, January 8. The phone line will be open seven days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Moore County Health Department will host vaccination clinics on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday during January beginning on Tuesday, January 12. Phase 1B eligible individuals who pre-register with the Health Department will be contacted by the Health Department staff to schedule an appointment. As with FirstHealth, appointments are required to receive the vaccine and walk-ins will not be accepted.

Q: Will I need to provide any identification to get vaccinated?

North Carolina does not require an identification card, like a driver's license, to be vaccinated. Some employers could request ID when limited vaccine has to be prioritized, but it is not required.

Q: If I've had COVID-19 previously, will I still need to get vaccinated?

A: Yes, and it is safe to get vaccinated with the vaccine if you have been infected in the past. The vaccine works to protect you against a future infection. You don't need a COVID test before vaccination.

Q: Once I've been vaccinated, how long can I expect the vaccine's protection to last?

A: Since the Pfizer and Moderna trials just ended, we know that the vaccines can protect people from COVID-19 illness for at least two months. We'll know even more about how long the immunity from the vaccines lasts as people have been vaccinated for a longer period of time.

Q: Once I've been vaccinated, do I still need to adhere to COVID-19 control measures like wearing a mask and social distancing?

A: Yes. COVID-19 vaccines are just one of many important tools to help us stop this pandemic. It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Everyone should continue using the 3 Ws—wearing a mask, waiting 6 feet apart, washing your hands, and limiting gatherings—until most people are vaccinated. Receiving the COVID-19 shot and following the 3 Ws is everyone's best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.

Q: Will people who have been vaccinated still need to quarantine if they've had close contact to a confirmed positive person?

A: Experts are still deciding on whether people who are vaccinated need to be quarantined if they have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19. At this time, anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, besides people who have had COVID-19 in the past 3 months, should quarantine. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines "close contact" as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection) until the patient is isolated.

Q: Will COVID-19 vaccination data be shared with the public?

A: The State of North Carolina will maintain an online public dashboard with vaccination data. The data in the dashboard will be updated weekly. It can be found here: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations>.

Q: How do States know how many people have been vaccinated?

A: North Carolina will use the COVID-19 Vaccine Management System (CVMS), a free, secure, web-based system accessible to all providers who give COVID-19 vaccinations. It helps vaccine providers know who has been vaccinated and with which vaccine to make sure people get the second dose of the same vaccine at the right time. It also helps people register for vaccination at the appropriate time and allows the state to manage vaccine supply. Pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens doing vaccinations in long-term care facilities, will not use CVMS to give and manage vaccines. These pharmacies will use their own systems. Your information on vaccination is confidential health information that is carefully managed to protect your privacy. Information will not be shared except in accordance with state and federal law. Any personal information will be taken out prior to sending public health information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Q: Is it possible to be co-infected with the flu and COVID-19?

A: It is possible to have flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, and COVID-19 at the same time. Contracting COVID -19 and the flu could lead to severe respiratory illnesses. Many people at higher risk from flu also seem to be at higher risk from COVID-19. If you are at high risk, it is especially important for you to get a flu vaccine this year. It is likely seasonal flu and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter. While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, it does reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death as well as saves healthcare resources for the care of patients with COVID-19. For more information on the 2020-21 seasonal Flu vaccine recommendations you may visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/acip/summary/summary-recommendations.htm>.
