



What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a novel respiratory coronavirus. COVID-19 poses a serious public health risk and is highly contagious.

How does COVID-19 spread?

Human coronaviruses are usually spread from an infected person to others through the air by coughing and sneezing and through close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Why are long-term care residents receiving the vaccination first?

The average age of residents in long term care facilities is 85 – most of whom have an underlying health condition, and some have multiple chronic conditions. According to CDC data, the risk of mortality in this age group is 630 times higher than those 18-29 years old. While many industries can stay open or partially open with safety measures, long-term care communities will not be able to reopen until there is a vaccine.

All of Volunteers of America National Services skilled nursing facilities have held their first vaccination clinic with their pharmacy partner. Contact your community for more information.

How will we receive the vaccine?

Vista Del Mar Senior Living is partnered with CVS Omnicare pharmacy to administer the vaccine doses. There are three scheduled dates for the vaccination for both the residents and staff: January 21, 2021, February 3, 2021, and March 4, 2021.

Is there risk that I can get COVID-19 from the vaccination?

No, there is no risk of getting COVID-19 from the vaccination. This vaccination contains no actual COVID-19 virus.

How do we know it's safe since it was developed so quickly?

Scientists have worked on coronavirus research for decades starting with the original SARS outbreak and influenza. Scientists only needed to isolate certain things about COVID-19 to begin creating a vaccine because we already know so much about the type of virus. Due to the public health crisis created by the pandemic, many private, government and independent groups came together and cooperated on a vaccine. This scale of cooperation is not typical, and the partnership created resources and information sharing to develop the vaccine faster.

What are the side effects of the vaccine? Are there long-term effects?

The most commonly reported side effects, which typically lasted several days, were pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. Of note, more people experienced these side effects after the second dose than after the first dose, so it is important for vaccination

providers and recipients to expect that there may be some side effects after either dose, but even more so after the second dose. The side-effects are a result of your body's immune system working to understand and create a response to the virus which is needed for your immunity. The long-term effects are still being studied. The first two months show no severe side effects. As with all vaccinations, long-term effects are monitored for up to 10 years.

What happens if I have an allergic reaction to the vaccine?

The community and pharmacy partner are prepared to react to any allergic reactions that may be experienced.

What if I don't want to be in the first round, will I have another opportunity?

We encourage everyone to participate in the onsite vaccinations as they are scheduled. The vaccinations are not administered by Volunteers of America. The availability and scheduling will be coordinated with the pharmacy partner. We currently know that each community will have three vaccination dates:

1. For first/initial dose of the vaccine for staff and residents.
2. Second dose for those who received a first dose AND a first dose for those who missed the first opportunity.
3. Second dose for those who received a first dose.

The last opportunity to receive a first dose will be at the second vaccination date. Any future opportunities for vaccination will be communicated as information becomes available.

Will I have to pay for it?

No, there will be no cost to you for the vaccine or its administration

How many shots will I need and when?

The vaccine includes two injections. The second injection may be given 3-4 weeks after the first injection. However, the timeframe for the second injection depends upon the manufacturer and what is written in the emergency use authorization.

How long is the vaccine effective?

We don't know. Because the vaccine is new, the length of immunity is unknown. There are some vaccines that do not require additional shots and there are other vaccines, such as the tetanus vaccine, that require periodic boosters. The vaccine will continue to be studied over time and if additional boosters are needed that information will be released when it is known. It is being recommended that individuals who have had COVID-19 should still get the vaccine.

What happens when residents and staff are vaccinated? Can we begin to reopen our community? Do we still have to wear masks?

We currently do not have any details or guidance in regards to what impact vaccinations will have on current restrictions and infection control procedures. Until that time, we will continue to follow current CDC and state department of health guidelines.

If I have already had COVID-19, do I still need to be vaccinated?

It is currently unknown how long the antibodies produced during a COVID-19 positive case provides

immunity. Therefore, it is still recommended that you be vaccinated. We recommend anyone with questions regarding vaccination for health concerns to consult with their primary care provider.

Am I required to receive the vaccine?

At this time, the decision to receive the vaccine is up to the resident and/or their family. However, it is recommended that residents be vaccinated for their protection.

Can I receive other vaccines at the time of the COVID vaccine administration?

No one should receive the COVID vaccine after having received other vaccination within 14 days.

If you have questions or want to involve your primary care provider, we can work with them to provide any information they may need.