

COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs for Associates/Clinicians: Receiving the Vaccine

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Ascension's Mission calls us all to "spiritually centered, holistic care" that enables us "to sustain and improve the health of individuals and communities." Both administering vaccines as a caregiver and receiving a vaccine are ways of living our Mission. As you review these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), think about how delivering clear information is a way of giving care, alleviating fears, and honoring each person with dignity and reverence.

Associate/Clinicians: Receiving the vaccination as a front line caregiver	3
Will the vaccine be mandatory for Ascension associates?	3
How did we determine which associates are candidates to receive the vaccine in a particular phase of deployment?	3
As an associate or provider, where should I present/whom should I contact if I am a candidate for this first phase and would like to receive the vaccine?	3
As an associate, is there a cost to me for receiving the vaccine?	3
If an associate has an adverse reaction and needs time off or incurs medical costs, who will cover this expense?	3
Who should I contact about getting the vaccine?	4
How will vaccines be delivered in Ascension Living associates? Clinic associates?	4
Will it have to be exactly 21 or 28 days after my first dose?	4
If I have received a vaccine will I still need to wear a mask and other PPE while working?	4
I received my first dose of the vaccine, experienced side effects and am not sure I want to go back for my second dose. How do I know if these are side effects or if I have COVID-19?	5

Frequently asked questions about getting COVID-19 vaccinations for Associates/Clinicians receiving the vaccine

You may have some questions about COVID-19 vaccinations. Here are some answers to some commonly asked questions. We also encourage you to talk with your doctor or provider about your questions and concerns. If you don't have a doctor or provider, visit <https://healthcare.ascension.org/doctors>.

Where can I find information about Ascension's approach to the COVID-19 vaccine and access points including how to schedule a vaccination?

Ascension Connect COVID-19 Hotlines

Market	Toll-Free Number
Ascension Connect Main Number	(833) 978-0649
Baltimore/Binghamton/DC	(833) 980-0692
Birmingham	(833) 980-0690
Florida & Gulf Coast	(833) 981-0712
Illinois (AMITA)	(224) 273-3900
Indiana	(833) 981-0733
Kansas and Oklahoma	(855) 782-1039
Michigan	(833) 981-0738
Tennessee	(833) 981-0626
Texas	(833) 919-1680
Wisconsin	(833) 981-0711

We also have established a COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center Google site that provides resources and updates for our Ascension community in support of our vaccine distribution and administration efforts. The internal COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center Google site can be found by clicking [here](#).

The external COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center Google site can be found by clicking [here](#).

The external COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center Google site will also be linked to our current Ascension COVID-19 [site](#).

Associate/Clinicians: Receiving the vaccination as a front line caregiver

Will the vaccine be mandatory for Ascension associates?

At this time, the COVID-19 vaccine will not be mandatory for Ascension associates, but is highly encouraged.

We strongly encourage all Ascension associates to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, at no cost, when it is made available to them; you will receive details about availability and procedures at that time. In our view, this is the right thing to do to protect our associates and those we are privileged to serve. We believe the vaccines are both safe and effective and the benefits of being vaccinated outweigh any identified risks or side effects.

As the distribution and availability of the COVID-19 vaccines expand over the coming weeks and months, we will continue to evaluate Ascension's position on vaccination requirements for our associates and staff.

How did we determine which associates are candidates to receive the vaccine in a particular phase of deployment?

This was determined in accordance with CDC and state guidelines. [COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations](#)

In accordance with these guidelines, the first group eligible to receive the vaccines, once they are available, will be our front-line caregivers – particularly those serving in emergency departments, COVID-19 units and intensive care units. This includes Ascension associates, contracted services (Medxcel, Trimedx, Touchpoint, and R1) and affiliated physicians/providers. We anticipate that the rest of our associates will be eligible for the vaccine as more doses become available and the distribution process progresses.

As an associate or provider, where should I present/whom should I contact if I am a candidate for this first phase and would like to receive the vaccine?

Associates eligible for the vaccine should contact their local Associate and Occupational Health (AOH) Department to schedule administration of their vaccine.

As an associate, is there a cost to me for receiving the vaccine?

No.

If an associate has an adverse reaction and needs time off or incurs medical costs, who will cover this expense?

If an adverse reaction, documented by a physician, results in missed time from work you will receive salary continuation not to exceed 40 hours under paycode SCK. If your disability/lost time exceeds 7

calendar days and you are benefit eligible, you should file a short-term disability (STD) claim with Sedgwick. If you are not eligible for STD or your STD claim has been denied, you may submit a PTO request to your manager or unpaid personal leave via Sedgwick. Any medical expense(s) incurred as a result of an adverse reaction should be submitted under your group health.

Who should I contact about getting the vaccine?

Associates should contact their local Associate and Occupational Health Department to for more information about receiving the vaccine.

How will vaccines be delivered in Ascension Living associates? Clinic associates?

Ascension Living has contracted with Walgreens to provide vaccinations to all associates and residential living communities. Occupational Health will work closely with clinic leadership to coordinate the vaccination administration implementation plans.

Will it have to be exactly 21 or 28 days after my first dose?

No. There will likely be a range of days within which the second dose should be administered. For example, we anticipate that the day range following the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine will be 19 to 23 days. When you receive your first dose of vaccine, your follow-up appointment for your second dose will be scheduled with your local Associate and Occupational Health Department. More information will be available after approval of the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).

If I have received a vaccine will I still need to wear a mask and other PPE while working?

Ascension associates who have been vaccinated should continue to follow the Ascension guidance for masking, PPE, and other safety measures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Vaccination is a very important measure to reduce transmission between our associates and patients. Vaccination, although associated with very high efficacy, is still not 100%. We are unable to know each individual person's response to the vaccine, but from the studies the protection has been as high as 95%. This means that according to the studies, if 100 people take the vaccine, 95 people will benefit from taking it and will be protected from infection. This is an excellent response compared to other vaccines. The benefit of vaccination is providing protection to those that receive it, and to create a majority of the population that is immune so we can prevent transmission of infection between people. Initially, all associates will need to continue observing behaviors to reduce transmission risk, from universal masking, to hand hygiene and disinfection, and social distancing when possible. Over time, when we have the vast majority of our population vaccinated, and we witness a resolution of COVID-19 infections within our communities, we will then review what best decisions to make regarding masking.

I received my first dose of the vaccine, experienced side effects and am not sure I want to go back for my second dose. How do I know if these are side effects or if I have COVID-19?

Sometimes after vaccination, the process of building immunity can cause symptoms, such as fever, body ache, headache, and fatigue, according to the CDC. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity, according to the CDC. While COVID-19 infection can cause these same symptoms, additional and more specific COVID-19 symptoms may include cough, shortness of breath, congestion/runny nose, and new loss of taste and smell. If symptoms persist or include these more specific COVID symptoms, consider contacting a healthcare provider and/or acquiring a COVID test.

For more information

Speak to your healthcare provider to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Other Resources

- CDC - [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Vaccines](#)
- FDA - [FDA COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- HHS Operation Warp Speed - [Fact Sheet: Explaining Operation Warp Speed](#)