

FAQS – Vaccine Phase 1B

- **Who can get the vaccine?**
 - On Monday, January 4, COVID-19 vaccines were expanded to **Phase 1B, Tier 1** which includes patients age 70 and older.
 - Vaccine quantities are still limited, but we are encouraged by this step and excited to begin vaccinating Ochsner Lafayette General patients who fall into this group.
 - Ochsner Lafayette General **is reaching out to qualified patients directly with information about how to schedule their vaccinations.**

- **How can I schedule?**
 - Patients will be contacted via email, text and/or automated phone message with details on how and when to schedule their vaccination appointments.
 - Scheduling will be available via a link that eligible patients will receive via email and/or text.
 - Patients may also call 1-855-206-9675 to schedule an appointment.
 - **Patients who fall into Phase 1B, Tier 1 may not be contacted immediately as quantities of the vaccine are still limited.**
 - More times and dates will become available as we receive more vaccine on a weekly basis. We encourage you to continue to check the scheduling link as more slots become available and appreciate your patience during this process.

- **I am over 70 but not an Ochsner Lafayette General patient. Can I get vaccinated?**
 - While vaccine quantities continue to be limited, Ochsner is beginning this phase of vaccinations starting with our existing patients. Qualified patients include those who are age 70 and older and who have seen an Ochsner provider within the last three years. **We will start with those who have been to one of our clinics within the last 90 days and invite more of our patients to register each week.** *This excludes our urgent care locations and virtual visits.*
 - We plan to expand vaccination criteria as more supply becomes available and following the recommendations of the state and Louisiana Department of Health (LDH).
 - LDH is also working with approximately 100 local pharmacies across the state to provide the vaccine on a limited basis. Information on those locations and how to schedule can be found at covidvaccine.la.gov.

- **What if I don't have an appointment, can I still get the vaccine?**

- Patients **must have** a scheduled appointment to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Walk-ins will not be accepted.
- Why? Due to the complex storage and limited time constraints with the COVID-19 vaccine, we want to ensure we are efficiently utilizing the vaccine to avoid any waste.
- **I don't fall into Phase 1B, Tier 1. When will I get my vaccine?**
 - We are hopeful that the vaccine will be available to more members of the public soon.
 - We encourage community members and patients to visit LafayetteGeneral.com/vaccine or ldh.la.gov/coronavirus for the latest information and resources.
 - Ochsner Lafayette General will communicate directly with patients as vaccines become available to them.
- **Is the vaccine safe for my age group?**
 - Following guidelines from the FDA emergency use authorization (EUA), no one is excluded from receiving the vaccine as there are no medical contraindications except for a severe allergic reaction to this vaccine or any of its components.
 - Because the Pfizer vaccine require two doses, we will schedule the second dose at the same location with the appropriate length of time (19-23 days) between visits. *You must be able to attend the second appointment in order to schedule the first.*
- **How long will the vaccine last?**
 - Since this is a novel virus, we are still unsure how long the vaccine antibodies will last. We are closely monitoring the research as more data becomes available.
- **What are the possible side effects of the vaccine?**
 - Similar to the flu shot, the vaccine is administered into a large muscle in the upper arm or thigh. Like with any vaccine, allergic reactions may occur. Some may experience mild fever, soreness, muscle aches, headaches, chills, fatigue/tiredness, muscle or joint pain, redness and/or swelling at the site of administration. These are signs of an immune response to the vaccine and expected in some patients.
 - Based on data reported from the FDA emergency use authorization (EUA), possible side effects have been more prominent after the second dose.
 - If you have pain or discomfort, you can take your normal pain reliever or talk to your pharmacist about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
 - To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot, you can apply a clean, cool compress over the area. To reduce discomfort from fever, drink plenty of fluids.
- **What happens if I feel ill after receiving the vaccine?**
 - While extreme serious reactions to the vaccine are rare, you should seek medical care if:
 - you experience a **severe allergic reaction** call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room

- the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
 - your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days
 - If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911.
 - Report side effects to [FDA/CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#). Reporting instructions are included in Fact Sheet you received when you got your vaccine.
- **Will I still have to mask and social distance after I get the shot?**
 - Yes. Remember, it takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require two shots may not protect you until at least a week after your second shot.
 - 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.
 - Until we reach herd immunity and the majority of the United States has been vaccinated, we will need to continue to practice social distancing, handwashing and wearing masks. These are the best ways to reduce your chance of being exposed to or spreading the virus until we end this pandemic.