

## **Talking Points for Patient Vaccine Calls and Questions – Updated 1.8.21**

For Hotline: How to answer phone – “UCHealth Vaccine hotline, this is **your name**”

### **Vaccine Distribution:**

#### **How will the COVID-19 vaccine be distributed?**

Supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine will be very limited at first. The State of Colorado has established a phased system for distribution, and we are required to follow those requirements. It will be made available first to the highest-risk individuals and then to the general public based on their risk for complications of COVID-19 or their risk of being exposed.

According to the state of Colorado’s distribution plan and current estimates of COVID-19 vaccine availability, highest-risk and critical workforce members may be vaccinated this winter including; health care workers, people in residential nursing facilities, first responders and the highest-risk individuals including those 70 years old and older. Higher-risk members may be vaccinated in the spring of 2021, and the general public in the summer of 2021. The state of Colorado expects it may take at least a year to give COVID-19 vaccines to all in the state who want one.

#### **How long will it take to vaccinate everyone in Colorado?**

Lots of people are anxious to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, but it will take time for companies to produce and distribute the vaccines. The state estimates that it will likely take at least a year to vaccinate our entire state with a COVID-19 vaccine.

Highest-risk and critical workforce members may be vaccinated this winter, higher-risk members in the spring of 2021, and the general public in the summer of 2021.

#### **Who is UCHealth vaccinating?**

Based on the state’s plan, **UCHealth is focusing efforts on vaccinations for people 70 years old and older.** You do not need to be a UCHealth patient in order to get vaccinated.

Independent or community health care workers who have not yet received the vaccine, as well as other people in phases 1A and 1B of the state’s plan are to receive their vaccines from their local public health agency. We recommend that you reach out to your local public health agency to receive additional information on ways to receive a vaccination.

An appointment is required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine; walk-ins cannot be accommodated.

#### **When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine, and how do I get on a list to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Based on the state’s plan, **UCHealth is focusing efforts on vaccinations for people 70 years old and older.** You do not need to be a UCHealth patient in order to get vaccinated.

The State of Colorado currently anticipates the vaccine could be available for higher-risk patients in the spring of 2021, and for the general public in the summer of 2021.

We will use My Health Connection, the patient portal for UHealth's electronic health record, to communicate with people. If you have an active My Health Connection account, you will automatically receive updates regarding the vaccine. **If you do not have an active My Health Connection account, please create one** to receive these updates. To create an account, go to [uchealth.org/mhcregister](https://uchealth.org/mhcregister).

At this time, we do not have enough vaccine doses to offer it to everyone. As UHealth receives shipments of the vaccine, we are providing it as quickly as possible, according to the state's plan. As we receive additional quantities of vaccine, **we will send vaccination invitations through our randomized selection process** to give everyone the same chance of receiving a vaccine.

When vaccine becomes available to your phase of distribution, you will receive an invitation from My Health Connection with instructions about how to schedule your vaccine appointments. Please be patient until you see the message titled "Urgent: Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine". When you receive this message, you will be able to schedule both vaccine doses. **You will have 48 hours to get your appointments scheduled.** If you miss the 48-hour time frame, you will receive a new opportunity to schedule in a future distribution phase.

An appointment is required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine; walk-ins cannot be accommodated.

UHealth is working to ensure we will be able to offer vaccinations to patients without access to MHC.

### **Do I need to be an existing UHealth patient in order to get vaccinated by UHealth?**

No, you do not need to be an existing UHealth patient in order to get vaccinated. If you don't have a My Health Connection account, you may sign up for one on our website – visit [uchealth.org/mhcregister](https://uchealth.org/mhcregister) to create your account. We will send messages through My Health Connection as the vaccine becomes available more broadly.

When vaccine becomes available to your phase of distribution, you will receive an invitation from My Health Connection with instructions about how to schedule your vaccine appointments. Please be patient until you see the message titled "Urgent: Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine". When you receive this message, you will be able to schedule both vaccine doses. **You will have 48 hours to get your appointments scheduled.**

## **Vaccination Phases:**

### **I am a health care worker or community provider (dentist, RN, etc.), but I don't work for UHealth. How do I get vaccinated?**

If the provider is employed by UHealth or on medical staff at a UHealth facility, they should email System Incident Command with the practice name, names of people in the practice who are requesting vaccines and their dates of birth.

Email: [uchealth-systemincidentcommand@uchealth.org](mailto:uchealth-systemincidentcommand@uchealth.org)

If the provider is not employed by UHealth, they should contact their local public health agency. A list of all local public health agencies throughout the state can be found at: [cdphe.colorado.gov/public-information/find-your-local-public-health-agency](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/public-information/find-your-local-public-health-agency).

## **I am a frontline essential worker (teacher, childcare, food and agriculture, postal, grocery, transit, public health or other), and am part of the 1B vaccination phase. How do I get vaccinated?**

If you are part of 1B because of your employment, vaccinations will be managed by your local public health agency. We recommend that you reach out to your local public health agency to receive additional information on ways to receive a vaccination. A list of all local public health agencies throughout the state can be found at: [cdphe.colorado.gov/public-information/find-your-local-public-health-agency](http://cdphe.colorado.gov/public-information/find-your-local-public-health-agency).

According to the guidelines set by the state, local public health agencies are planning and scheduling for post-February 28 administration of vaccines for frontline essential workers.

## **My Health Connection/Vaccination Appointment:**

### **How do I know if I was sent a notification to schedule my vaccination?**

If a notification was sent, it will appear as a message in your My Health Connection account. We have only sent a very limited number of messages at this time because we do not have enough vaccine to offer it broadly. As we receive additional shipments over the coming weeks and months, we will offer it more broadly.

### **Can an agent check to see if a notification was sent?**

Yes. Go to the patient chart in Epic>Misc Tab>highlight My Health Connection Message Review>. On the right side, look for “Urgent: Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine”. This will show the date and time the message was received.

12/27/2020 2:02 PM	Y	Mhc, Patient	System Message	Urgent: Schedule your COVID-19 vaccin
--------------------	---	--------------	----------------	---------------------------------------

Also let the patient know that if a notification was sent, it will appear as a Message in their My Health Connection account.

### **I received a notification and tried to schedule but cannot find any days or open slots?**

All the available dates and times are only viewable through My Health Connection. You may need to choose an alternate location or day in order to find an open slot. To select a different day, change the date in the “Start search on” box on the scheduling screen.

### **I received a notification to schedule my vaccination, but my spouse didn't. Can my spouse get vaccinated when I come in for my appointment?**

Not at this time. Currently, we do not have enough vaccine doses to offer it to everyone in phase 1B. As UCHealth receives shipments of the vaccine, we are providing it as quickly as possible, according to the state's plan. As we receive additional quantities of vaccine, we will send vaccination invitations through our randomized selection process to give everyone the same chance of receiving a vaccine.

### **I made an appointment for a vaccine and it didn't say where to go.**

Please check your My Health Connection message and appointment reminder. This should give you information about where your vaccine clinic will be. Go to [uhealth.org/myhealthconnection](http://uhealth.org/myhealthconnection), or download the UCHealth app.

## I will need help when I get to my appointment. Is there valet and patient transportation available?

Please check your appointment details in My Health Connection. There you will find the location of your vaccination, as well as information regarding whether there is valet and patient transport available. **Here is availability by location:**

Location	Valet	Patient Transport
UCH	YES	YES
HRH	NO	YES
LPH	NO	YES
CCMC	YES	NO
PVH	YES	YES
MCR	YES	YES
GH	YES	YES
YVMC	NO	NO
PPRH	NO	NO
MAC	NO	NO
MHN	YES	YES

## I received a notification but didn't know it and missed my 48-hour window to schedule my appointment. How do I get scheduled for a vaccine?

We are working to provide these vaccines as quickly as possible. For this reason, we are offering appointment slots to others when people don't respond and schedule their appointment within 48 hours. The link to schedule is valid for 48 hours.

As the COVID-19 vaccines become more available, we plan to expand vaccine availability and provide more opportunities for our patients to be vaccinated.

## I made an appointment for my vaccine and need to change it - how can I do that?

You need to go into MHC and cancel the current appointment then start over and schedule a new vaccine appointment only if you are within the 48-hour period from the initial notification.

If you are outside of the 48-hour period from the original notification, you **will not** be able to reschedule. You can only cancel and reschedule within the 48-hour period.

We do not have the ability to schedule or cancel any of these appointments and it all must be done through MHC.

## I received my first vaccine but need to reschedule my 2<sup>nd</sup> dose (or I missed my 2<sup>nd</sup> dose). What should I do?

You must make every attempt to make it to your appointment for the second dose. You are not fully protected with just one dose. We are unable to reschedule the second shot at this time.

## I received my first vaccine but need to reschedule my 2<sup>nd</sup> dose because I have COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19, and am in my isolation period. What should I do?

Rescheduling of a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose can be considered in instances where the patient has COVID-19 or is isolating due to COVID-19 exposure, and if there are other appointment times available. **These requests must be sent to system incident command for approval.**

## I received a notification to schedule my vaccine but I am currently in a clinical trial for another COVID-19 vaccine – what should I do?

Reach out to your contacts at the trial for more information.

## Can I get my 2nd vaccination at a different location from my 1<sup>st</sup> vaccination?

No, you must get your second vaccination at the same location as your first dose. Your second dose cannot be rescheduled at this time.

## Will I be charged for the vaccine? When I go to schedule in the app it asks if I want to use my insurance for this visit.

No. We are not charging for the vaccine or vaccine administration. However, if you answer yes, it doesn't affect scheduling or billing.

## I am running late to my vaccine, should I still come?

You should still get to your vaccine appointment even if you are running late. We want you to show up as close to your appointed time as possible but it is more important to get your vaccine.

## Can I walk in and get a COVID-19 vaccination?

An appointment is required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Walk-ins cannot be accommodated.

All vaccinations need to be scheduled through My Health Connection, the patient portal for UHealth's electronic medical record. If you do not have an active My Health Connection account, please create one to receive these updates. To create an account, go to [uhealth.org/mhcregister](https://uhealth.org/mhcregister).

When vaccine becomes available to your phase of distribution, you will receive an update from My Health Connection with instructions on how to schedule your vaccine appointments. Please be patient until you see the message titled "Urgent: Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine". When you receive this message, you will be able to schedule both vaccine doses. **You will have 48 hours to get your appointments scheduled.** If you miss the 48-hour time frame, you will receive a new opportunity to schedule in a future distribution phase.

## Can I bring my child or support person to my vaccine appointment?

Due to COVID-19, we are limiting visitors and prefer that you come alone. In the event that you can't come alone, you may bring one support person.

## Do you have EPI pens at the vaccine site?

Yes, we have emergency kits at each site that include an EPI pen.

## What if I do not have a My Health Connection account?

We are currently using My Health Connection, the patient portal for UHealth's electronic medical record, for all vaccination scheduling. We are exploring ways to contact patients who are unable to have a MHC account and help them schedule. If you do not have a My Health Connection account, please create one. To create an account, go to [uhealth.org/mhcregister](https://uhealth.org/mhcregister).

## **I can't create a My Health Connection account (no computer/smart phone/other). What should I do?**

UHealth is committed to ensuring that all patients have access to the COVID-19 vaccine. We are in contact with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and are setting up a process to target vaccinations to those patients that don't have access to My Health Connection. We will be sharing additional information as a plan is developed.

## **I need help with my My Health Connection account (password reset, other).**

The My Health Connection support team is available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MST. Call 855.395.9031 or go to: [uhealth.org/contact-us](https://uhealth.org/contact-us).

## **Before Vaccination:**

### **Should I take a pain reliever before getting the vaccine?**

It is not recommended to take a pain reliever such as ibuprofen, aspirin or acetaminophen before receiving the vaccine. However, after you receive the vaccine, you can take a pain reliever for any symptoms that are bothersome. Current data suggests that acetaminophen is the best pain reliever to take within 48 hours of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

## **After Vaccination:**

### **How much will the COVID-19 vaccine reduce the risks or complications of COVID-19?**

Early results from clinical trials have shown that after the second dose, some vaccines may be 94 to 95 percent effective in preventing COVID-19. Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting very sick, even if you do get COVID-19. Getting vaccinated may also protect the people around you, especially those at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

### **The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines require 2 doses. Will I have any protection after the first dose?**

Clinical trials have shown the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines may provide limited protection after 1 dose. These vaccines require 2 doses for full protection.

### **After the second dose of the vaccine, how long does it take before I have full protection?**

Clinical trials reported efficacy (how well the vaccine prevented COVID-19) beginning at 1 week after the second dose. In those trials, the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines prevented 94 to 95% of COVID-19 cases after the second dose, compared to control groups of people who received a placebo.

### **Can I get COVID-19 even after getting the vaccine?**

Many of the COVID-19 vaccines require 2 doses. It often takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after getting the vaccine. That means a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after getting the vaccine and get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

## **Once I get the COVID-19 vaccine, how long am I protected for? Will yearly vaccinations be needed like the flu?**

You must receive 2 doses in order to be protected. We do not yet know the frequency of vaccination for COVID-19.

## **Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine, or can I test positive for COVID-19 because of the vaccine?**

It is not possible to get COVID-19 from the COVID-19 vaccine, and it won't produce a positive COVID-19 PCR test result. You may have common side effects, including soreness at the injection site, aches, fatigue, chills or low-grade fever.

## **Should I get a blood test to make sure the COVID-19 vaccine worked?**

No. Neither a reactive result (antibodies to the virus are present in your blood sample) nor a non-reactive result (antibodies to the virus are not present) from a COVID-19 test is proof that the vaccine did or didn't work. Antibody testing is not currently recommended to assess for immunity to COVID-19, following mRNA COVID-19 vaccination.

## **MHC and my AVS show that I received a pediatric vaccine – why?**

Some people receiving vaccine may show on their AVS and in MHC they received a pediatric vaccine. This is an error and does not reflect the actual vaccine they received. The Epic team is working on fixing the issue and their MHC account and medical record will be adjusted to accurately reflect the correct vaccine. The AVS cannot be corrected because it is a snapshot in time.

## **If I get the vaccine, can I still give convalescent plasma?**

Thank you for your consideration. At this time, the answer is no. We do not have any additional information at this time.

## **Do I need to still wear a mask after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes. The vaccine is not 100% effective and you can still get COVID-19 after vaccination. Wearing masks and social distancing are still your best tools to help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. Getting the vaccine and following CDC recommendations to protect yourself and others, including wearing a mask, social distancing and frequent hand washing, will offer the best protection from COVID-19.

## **Where will my vaccination information be recorded?**

UCHealth will include your vaccination information in your My Health Connection account as well as the state/local jurisdiction's Immunization Information System (IIS) or other designated system. You will also receive a card with the information related to the vaccine administered including the manufacturer, lot number and date the vaccine was administered. This will ensure that you receive the same vaccine when you return for the second dose.

## **Vaccine Safety:**

### **Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?**

Tens of thousands of people have enrolled in clinical trials, and we will continue to study the vaccine.

Ongoing, long-term monitoring will continue as it does for all vaccine development. No steps in the normal vaccine development process have been skipped or shortened. UCHealth has participated in trials for two of these COVID-19 vaccines.

For more information, go to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) website: [covid19.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/vaccine-for-coloradans](https://www.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/vaccine-for-coloradans).

### **Will the findings of the COVID-19 vaccine trials be made public and reviewed by independent experts?**

All phase 3 clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccine candidates are overseen by an independent Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB). This board acts across all of the trials for all of the sponsors. The FDA and vaccine manufacturers are releasing data from their trials publicly.

### **Did the COVID-19 vaccine trials include people of color?**

Yes. For the COVID-19 vaccines that have been authorized so far, the clinical trials included thousands of people of color. Michael Rouse was among those who participated in the Moderna trial. Learn more about why Michael opted to participate.

For the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, about 13% of study participants were Latino, 10% were Black, 5.5% were Asian and 1% were Native American.

For the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, about 20% of study participants were Latino, 10% were Black, 4% were Asian and 3% were from other ethnic and racial groups.

### **Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine when it first comes out, or should I wait to get it until the long term effects are better understood?**

UCHealth experts recommend that everyone get a COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to you. Clinical trials are evaluating COVID-19 vaccines in tens of thousands of study participants. Information from these trials will allow the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to decide how safe and effective they are. Ongoing, long-term monitoring will continue as it does for all vaccine development. No steps in the normal vaccine development process have been skipped or shortened.

### **What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

In general, the side effects for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are similar, and are like those of the flu shot. The most commonly reported side effects are pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. They usually last only a few days.

### **What should I do if I experience side effects other than pain at injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever?**

Report vaccine side effects to **FDA/CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)**. The VAERS toll-free number is 1-800-822-7967 or report online to [vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html](https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html).

Side effects can also be reported to the CDC with **V-safe**. You can use your smartphone to tell the CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second vaccine dose. Go to: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html).

### **I had a severe reaction to my initial dose of vaccine, should I still get my 2<sup>nd</sup> dose?**

No – when there are severe reactions like anaphylaxis from the first dose, the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose is contraindicated. We need to cancel the 2<sup>nd</sup> appointment for the patient because they are not able to cancel this through MHC.

### **I am allergic to the flu vaccine. Do you think there will be a problem with getting a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Unlike most of the flu vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccines are not made using egg-based products. If you are allergic to any vaccines or have other conditions you are concerned may impact your response to the COVID-19 vaccine, you should talk with your doctor before signing up to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine if I have had a severe allergic reaction in the past?**

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine and you think you might be having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site, get help right away by calling 911.

**If you have had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine**, you should not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. If you had a severe allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, the [CDC recommends](#) that you should not get the second dose.

**These recommendations include allergic reactions to PEG and polysorbate.** Polysorbate is not an ingredient in either mRNA COVID-19 vaccine but is closely related to PEG, which is in the vaccines. People who are allergic to PEG or polysorbate should not get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

**If you have had an immediate allergic reaction—even if it was not severe—to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine**, the CDC recommends that you should not get either of the currently available mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. If you had an immediate allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you should not get the second dose. Your doctor may refer you to a specialist in allergies and immunology to provide more care or advice.

**If you have had an immediate allergic reaction—even if it was not severe—to a vaccine or injectable therapy for another disease**, ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine. Your doctor will help you decide if it is safe for you to get vaccinated.

The CDC recommends that **people with a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injectable medications—such as food, pet, venom, environmental, or latex allergies—get vaccinated.** People with a history of allergies to oral medications or a family history of severe allergic reactions may also get vaccinated.

## **Vaccine and Your Health:**

### **If I am pregnant or breastfeeding, can I get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccines have been given Emergency Use Authorization to be given to people age 16 and older (Pfizer) and 18 and older (Moderna). There is no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant women. Studies are ongoing and more are planned.

If you are part of a group who is recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and you are pregnant or breast feeding, you may choose to be vaccinated. Please discuss with your doctor so that you can make an informed decision. [LINK TO PREGNANCY](#).

### **Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?**

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for people with underlying health problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes and obesity. People with these conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

### **I have a compromised immune system. Can I get vaccinated for COVID-19?**

As a general rule, immunocompromised individuals should receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Patients with diabetes should receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Data is not currently available to establish safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine in people who:

- Have HIV.
- Have other conditions that cause them to have a low immune system.
- Take certain medications or therapies that weaken the immune system.

If you fall into one of these groups, you can still receive COVID-19 vaccination, unless your doctor tells you not to. If you have a compromised immune system, it is possible that your response to the vaccine may not be as strong as others.

### **If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?**

Yes. The CDC recommends that you get vaccinated even if you have already had COVID-19, because you can catch it more than once. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection will last.

### **I am currently recovering from COVID-19. Can I get vaccinated?**

No. You should wait to get vaccinated if you have active COVID-19 infection or symptoms of active infection. You should complete your isolation or quarantine period before getting vaccinated.

### **I received convalescent plasma or was treated with a monoclonal antibody when I had COVID-19. Can I get vaccinated?**

Vaccination should be delayed for at least 90 days for anyone that received convalescent plasma or was treated with a monoclonal antibody. This will help to avoid interference of the treatment with vaccine-induced immune responses.

### **Can I receive a COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccines?**

You should avoid any other vaccinations for at least 14 days after you receive your first COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Can my child get vaccinated for COVID-19?**

No. More studies need to be conducted before COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for children younger than 16 years old.

## General Vaccine Information:

### Can I choose if I get the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine?

These are being randomly pushed out and you cannot choose. You won't necessarily know when you are scheduling if you are scheduling for Pfizer or Moderna, however, you can tell based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> booster appointment; Pfizer is 21 days out and Moderna is 28 days. You will also receive an EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) document during eCheckin that will tell you which vaccine you will be receiving.

### Which COVID-19 vaccine is best?

Both the Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines (the only 2 with early data available in the U.S.) have been shown to be 94 to 95 percent effective. Study participants are being followed and data updates will be released over time.

UCHealth will offer COVID-19 vaccines that have been reviewed by the FDA and CDC, as they are released and distributed. We will acquire as many of the COVID-19 vaccine brands as possible.

### Is there an approved COVID-19 vaccine?

On December 11, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. On December 18, 2020, the FDA issued an Emergency Use Authorization for use of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Sometime in 2021, it is predicted that COVID-19 vaccines from Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca will also be available, possibly followed by Novavax.

### What is an emergency use authorization (EUA)?

The United States FDA has made the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines available under an emergency access mechanism called an EUA. The EUA is supported by a Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) declaration that circumstances exist to justify the emergency use of drugs and biological products during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have not undergone the same type of review as an FDA-approved or cleared product. The FDA may issue an EUA when certain criteria are met, which includes that there are no adequate, approved, available alternatives. In addition, the FDA decision is based on the totality of scientific evidence available showing that the product may be effective to prevent COVID-19 during the COVID-19 pandemic and that the known and potential benefits of the product outweigh the known and potential risks of the product. All of these criteria must be met to allow for the product to be used in the treatment of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### How was a vaccine for COVID-19 developed so quickly?

Scientists didn't start from scratch. They built on many years of research that was already done with previous respiratory viruses such as the viruses that caused SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome). These are other coronaviruses in the same family as COVID-19. It can take longer to test a vaccine if a virus is not common in the population. Researchers often have to wait for a certain number of people in studies to get sick. They can then compare vaccinated groups to the placebo groups.

Because COVID-19 has been widespread in communities and spreading easily, the trials were able to move forward in shorter than usual timeframes. No steps in the normal vaccine

development process have been skipped. Safety and efficacy were tested the same way as all other vaccines.

### **Will the COVID-19 vaccines protect me against new versions (mutations) of the COVID-19 virus?**

At this time, experts believe the COVID-19 vaccines are likely to be effective against new versions of the COVID-19 virus. Additional research is being conducted to determine if the current vaccines work on the new mutations.

### **Does the COVID-19 vaccine have to be given by shot/injection?**

At this time, there are two COVID-19 vaccines that have been given emergency use authorization – the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. Both vaccines are given by shot into the muscle of the arm, like the flu shot.

### **How many doses will I need of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines require 2 doses. These are given 21 (Pfizer) and 28 (Moderna) days apart, depending on which vaccine you receive.

### **Where can I get more information on the COVID-19 vaccine and distribution?**

UHealth has posted information about the COVID-19 vaccines and related clinical trials on our website at [uhealth.org/covidvaccine](https://uhealth.org/covidvaccine). When we have updates and start providing the COVID-19 vaccine for our patients and the public, we will share that information.

For more information on the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) vaccination plan, go to [covid19.colorado.gov/vaccine](https://covid19.colorado.gov/vaccine).