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City of Laredo Health Department



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Richard A. Chamberlain, DrPH(c), MPH, RS
Director of Health

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

Q: Who will get the vaccine first?

A: Initial CDC and state guidance prioritizes those with the highest risk of exposure and mortality to receive the vaccines first. This initial phase will include tier one: hospital COVID staff, long-term care facilities COVID staff, EMS service staff, home health care workers, hospice care workers and residents of skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. The next tier will include healthcare workers in outpatient offices working with COVID patients, free standing emergency medical facilities and urgent cares working with COVID staff, community pharmacy staff, public health and emergency response staff involved in the administration of testing and vaccinations, medical examiners and associated staff, embalmers and funeral service staff, and school nurses.

Q: Is the vaccine safe?

A: The vaccine will undergo FDA safety review by independent experts in the field as part of its Emergency Use Authorization protocol. Aside from mild reactions such as fever, muscle aches, fatigue and localized injection pain, there have been no serious reported safety concerns from the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. The CDC and FDA will continue to monitor individuals who have received the vaccine to ensure there is no evidence of even rare safety issues.

Q: Why should I get the vaccine?

A: For health care workers and those constantly exposed, this vaccine will provide effective protection at 94-95% to us, our families, and patients. COVID-19 can be a fatal and debilitating disease. The vaccine helps break the chain of transmission.

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

A: No. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use only a gene from the virus while other vaccines use an inactivated virus. None can cause COVID-19.

Q: How many doses do I need?

A: For the initial Pfizer vaccine, an initial shot will be followed in 21 days by a second one. The Moderna vaccine will be 28 days. The products are not interchangeable, so you would need to get the same vaccine for both doses.



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Q: Am I required to take the vaccine?

A: No. This is voluntary and not required. Yet, we strongly encourage everyone to take the vaccine based on current safety and efficacy data. We may mandate our employees to be vaccinated in the future, similar to the influenza vaccination requirement for health care workers.

Q: If I already had COVID-19, do I still need the vaccine?

A: We don't really know at this time how long the immunity will last to COVID-19. Best data suggest that after 90 days, immunity may wane. At this time, we don't recommend anyone to take the vaccine within 90 days of infection.

Q: Once I get the vaccine, can I stop all COVID precautions?

A: No. The vaccine is not 100% effective, nor do we know how long the immunity will last. The vaccine also requires a second dose to achieve its stated 95% effectiveness. So, you can still get infected after the first dose. Furthermore, it is also possible that you will still get infected but not get seriously sick. Mask, social distance, and good hygiene are still critical to breaking the chain of transmission.

Facts about Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccines

Pfizer Vaccines Storage and Handling:

- Ultra-cold frozen: 6months
- Refrigerator: 5 days at 2 and 8 C
- Room Temp: 6 hours at 2 and 8 C
- -75 C + 15 C Long Term Storage or
- -70 C + 10 C For use
- MDV has a 0.45ml frozen liquid drug product
- Reconstitution **YES** with Saline
- 5 Doses per vial after dilution
- 0.3ml dose per each vaccine injected intramuscularly
- 2 doses **21** days apart

Moderna Vaccine Storage and Handling:

- Frozen: 6 months -25 to -15 C/-13 to 5 F
- Refrigerator: 30 days 2-8 C/36-46 F
- Room Temp: 12 hrs.
- MDV has 10 preservative free 0.5 ml doses per vial



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- 10 doses per vial
 - Reconstitution NO
 - 0.5ml ready to use per each vaccine injected intramuscularly
 - 2 doses **28** days apart
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- ❖ All providers will need to input all COVID-19 vaccine into the Immtrac2 system after 24hrs. after administration.
 - ❖ All providers will need to use the same brand of vaccine for the 2nd dose. These vaccines are **Not Interchangeable**.
 - ❖ No severe side effects are known in the clinical trials for both vaccines.
 - ❖ Both and future vaccines need to be approved by the FDA.