COVID-19 Vaccine Information

for Sickle Cell Community-Based Organizations

JANUARY 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION: cdc.gov/COVID19

COVID-19 and Vaccine Basics

What is known about COVID-19?

- Infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can result in a range of illness, from mild symptoms to severe illness and death.
- We don’t know how SARS-CoV-2 will affect each person.
- Some people, such as adults 65 and older or people with certain medical conditions, are more likely than others to become severely ill.

Why should the sickle cell community be especially concerned?

- People with sickle cell disease are at a high risk for severe COVID-19 complications because of the common issues shared by the two conditions.
- SCD and COVID-19 can both cause increased blood clotting, damage to blood vessels and lung problems. SCD patients are also at a higher risk for acute chest syndrome.
- The case fatality rate for people with SCD who get COVID-19 is almost double the case fatality rate for the general US population.

How to prevent COVID-19

- Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose.
- Avoid close contact with others. Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
- Get a COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccination is a safer way to build protection

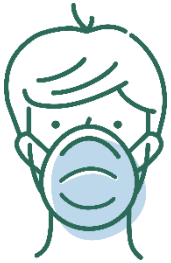
- Getting the virus that causes COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as an antibody or immune. But experts don't know how long this protection lasts.
- The risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity.
- COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by building immunity without the risk of severe illness.

Why should sickle cell patients get vaccinated?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) list sickle cell disease (SCD) as one of the populations vulnerable to severe COVID-19.
- The risks of serious consequences from contracting COVID-19 are far worse than the temporary or rare reactions to the vaccine.
- The fact that SCD affects the immune system should not cause a safety problem for COVID-19 vaccines.
- Consult with your doctor or health care team about whether your personal medical condition causes an exception to this general recommendation.

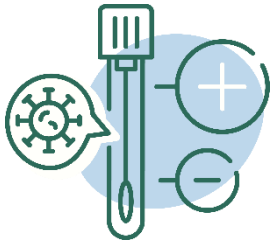
Key facts about COVID-19 vaccination

Getting vaccinated can help prevent getting sick with COVID-19



People who have already gotten sick with COVID-19 may still benefit from getting vaccinated

COVID-19 vaccines cannot give you COVID-19



COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests*

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/about-vaccines/vaccine-myths.html

*https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html

Safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority

COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all vaccines.

Before Authorization

FDA ACIP

- **FDA** carefully reviews all safety data from clinical trials.
- **ACIP** reviews all safety data before recommending use.

After Authorization

FDA CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- **FDA** and **CDC** closely monitor vaccine safety and side effects. There are systems in place that allow CDC and FDA to watch for safety issues.

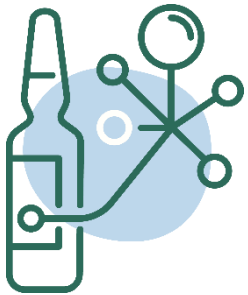
VAERS Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System www.vaers.hhs.gov

v-safe after vaccination health checker

V-safe:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from COVID-19

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine...



- Will help create an immune response in your body against the virus

- May help keep you from getting severely ill, even if you do get COVID-19

What to expect before, during, and after COVID-19 vaccination

Before

- Learn about COVID-19 vaccines.
- See if COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for you.

During

- Read the fact sheet that tells you about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you receive.
- Receive a vaccination record card.

After

- Expect some side effects.
- Enroll in v-safe. V-safe will remind you if you need a second shot.
- Continue using all the measures to protect yourself and others.

V-safe: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html

Vaccination is one measure to help stop the pandemic

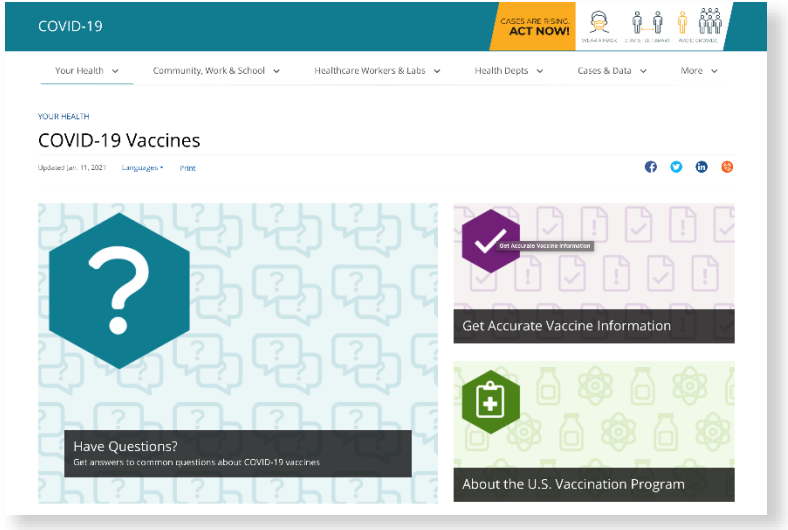
- While COVID-19 mRNA vaccines appear to be highly effective, additional preventive tools remain important to limit the spread of COVID-19.
- The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC recommendations to protect yourself and others offers the best protection from COVID-19.
  - Cover your nose and mouth with a mask.
  - Stay at least 6 feet from people who don't live with you.
  - Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
  - Wash your hands.

Protect yourself, your family, friends, coworkers, and your community. Get vaccinated.

- Choose to get vaccinated when it is offered.
- Participate in **v-safe** and help CDC monitor for any health effects after vaccination.
- Share your experience with coworkers, friends, and family.
- Know the basics about the COVID-19 vaccine.
  Help answer questions from your family and friends.
- Show you received the vaccine by wearing a sticker or button prominently.

CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Websites

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html



https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html

Getting Vaccinated

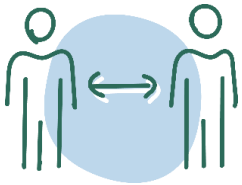
Where and when to get your vaccine

- Per guidelines from the Medical and Research Advisory Committee, SCDAA recommends that sickle cell patients receive the vaccine.
- Vaccine qualification and availability varies from state to state. Check with your doctor and local authorities to determine where and when to get vaccinated.
- **[MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS MAY ADD MORE INFORMATION AS IT PERTAINS TO THEIR SPECIFIC LOCATION]**

After Vaccination

- Continue COVID-19 prevention measures:

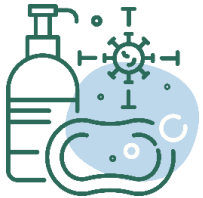
Cover your nose and mouth with a mask.



Stay at least 6 feet from people who don't live with you.

Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

Wash your hands.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- Enroll in **v-safe**
- If you have questions about your health and vaccination, call your doctor, nurse, or clinic.

For more information about COVID-19 and vaccines:
www.cdc.gov/COVID19