



## FAQ: The COVID-19 Vaccine and Migrant, Immigrant, and Food & Farm Worker Patients

Migrant Clinicians Network continues to receive questions from our clinical network on preparing for vaccine distribution to their migrant, immigrant, and farmworker communities. At this time, without a national distribution plan, each region's distribution process is different. The dynamic situation does not belie the underlying mantra: everybody deserves a chance to get vaccinated against COVID-19. We encourage our constituents to continue to strongly and vocally advocate for the most underserved populations, who have frequently found themselves deemed "essential workers" in this pandemic while they remain among the most at risk of illness.

This FAQ was last revised March 8, 2021. Information and data are changing rapidly. For more updated information, please visit our blog: [www.migrantclinician.org/blog](http://www.migrantclinician.org/blog).

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### How do I respond to my patients' basic questions about the safety of vaccines?

This critical basic question is very important to answer fully, with respect and patience, and in a culturally competent manner. Some basic points to consider:

- During clinical trials, tens of thousands of Americans of all ethnicities received the vaccination, after which researchers followed them for months to assess reactions.
- Since its release, millions of health care workers have received the shot themselves. Many of your doctors, nurses, and health care staff, those who work tirelessly to care for you, have taken the shots to protect themselves and in turn their communities, showing another vote of confidence in the safety of the vaccines.
- Like all vaccinations, there is a low risk of side effects, most commonly pain at the site of injection, fatigue, muscle or joint pain, and headaches, all of which clear up in a matter of days.

It is important to remember that some vulnerable populations who would best benefit from the COVID-19 vaccine are also the populations that have been grossly mistreated historically during vaccine trials or

forced into state-sponsored medical procedures without consent. The racist underpinnings of our public health systems continue to traumatize our patients today.

### **Practical Resources**

- [CDC's Answering Patients' Questions](#)
- Migrant Clinicians Network offers the #YoMeLaPuse campaign to encourage vaccination, with this [short multigenerational video](#).
- Migrant Clinicians Network developed the following videos as short public service announcements in English and Spanish:
  - PSA in English: [COVID-19 Vaccine: Dr. Eva Galvez, a physician serving migrant and immigrant communities](#)
  - PSA in Spanish: [La Vacuna del COVID-19: Dra. Eva Galvez, una doctora sirviendo a las comunidades migrantes](#)
  - Interview in English: [Interview: COVID-19 Vaccine: Dr. Eva Galvez, a physician serving migrant and immigrant communities](#)
  - Interview in Spanish: [Entrevista: Vacuna del COVID-19: Dra. Eva Galvez, una doctora sirviendo a las comunidades migrantes](#)
- [FDA's fact sheets on the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines](#) have been translated into numerous languages. They include information on side effects.
- WHO's [The Different Types of COVID-19 Vaccines](#), one of a multipart series on COVID-19 vaccines and all with accessible drawings, is available in English, Spanish, and other languages, for a more in-depth look at how the vaccines were developed.
- MCN's checklist helps outreach teams in safely planning in-person events, which may be helpful when planning vaccination events:
  - [Checklist in Spanish: Safely Conducting "Touchless" Outreach Events During COVID-19 to Bring Services to Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant Populations](#)
  - [Checklist in English: Safely Conducting "Touchless" Outreach Events During COVID-19 to Bring Services to Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant Populations](#)

### **For Further Reading**

Migrant Clinicians Network has two statements on the need for equity and cultural competence in vaccine distribution:

- [Prioritizing Farmworkers and Other Essential Food Workers for the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

- [Statement: Community Health Workers, Outreach & Education Must Be Front & Center to Support Immigrants & Migrants When COVID-19 Vaccination Arrives](#)

#### **Other Articles of Note**

- [Addressing Racial Equity in Vaccine Distribution](#), from KFF
  - [Coronavirus Vaccine Hesitancy in Black and Latinx Communities](#), from Covid Collaborative
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## **When will farmworkers or other essential workers get access to a vaccine?**

Without a federal framework for distribution, states, counties, and communities are building their own distribution timelines. In general, most municipalities are categorizing farmworkers and other essential workers as part of “Phase 1B”, after health care workers and long-term facility workers and residents are given access to the vaccine. Thousands of farmworkers around the country have already received their vaccine where they have been prioritized, like in California. In other areas, vaccines remain unavailable.

- Farmworkers need your advocacy, now more than ever. While vaccination distribution continues to be chaotic in many parts of the country, clinicians need to loudly and regularly speak up on behalf of their patients. Make connections, stay informed of when vaccinations are arriving, insert yourself into the discussions on distribution, communicate regularly with the larger farmworker community.
  - Encourage essential workers to keep checking in with your local community health center and/or health department, as localized distribution is rapidly changing.
  - Develop a health center team to coordinate vaccination for farmworkers and other essential workers. Create a detailed workplan and workflow to clearly prepare for all aspects of vaccinations, from paperwork burdens to appointment confirmations to the vaccination provision itself. Include community advocates. Be prepared for poor distribution communication and interruptions in deliveries by preparing and executing a transparent communication plan with essential workers, that anticipates the many bumps and hiccups in vaccine provision and distribution. Build in flexibility and contingency plans when possible, recognizing the changes in farmworker populations as the seasons progress.
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## **The Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines require two shots. What if a patient is moving? Should the patient wait to get the one-shot vaccine, or to get a two-shot vaccine in the next location?**

Due to ongoing limited supply, we recommend that farmworkers get vaccinated when they have the opportunity to do so. Encourage your patient to take a photo of the vaccination card and to send that photo to a family member or trusted person, so that if the card is lost (or even the phone), there is evidence of the first dose of vaccination.

If a patient isn't sure if they can make a second appointment, sign them up with Health Network. Migrant Clinicians Network operates Health Network, a virtual case management system that assists migrants with ongoing health needs in finding health care at their next destination. Clinicians are strongly encouraged to enroll patients who may need to migrate before they can receive the second vaccination. After enrollment, a Health Network Associate will follow up with the patient and assist in finding a health facility in the migrant's next location so the patient can access the correct second dose. Health Network's services are without cost to the health facilities or patients.

**Learn more about Health Network here:**

<https://www.migrantclinician.org/services/network.html>

Learn more about Health Network enrollment here:

<https://www.migrantclinician.org/services/network/enrollment-in-health-network.html>

Contact Theresa Lyons-Clampitt for more information: [tylons@migrantclinician.org](mailto:tylons@migrantclinician.org).

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## **Are some vaccines more effective than others?**

Clinical trials have shown that all presently approved vaccines have a remarkable 100% prevention of death and severe disease, the marker of a highly effective vaccine. The three available vaccines vary slightly in their efficacy rates – but hundreds of thousands of people have died in the US of COVID-19, while zero deaths are attributed to the vaccine provision itself – another indication that all the vaccines presently available are highly effective and safe. Consequently, we strongly encourage patients to not delay on receiving a vaccine if given the opportunity, regardless of manufacturer. Read more about MCN's take on the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, in English and Spanish, [here](#).

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## **What about the COVID-19 variant? How does that affect the efficacy of the vaccine?**

The science around the vaccine and the COVID-19 variants is moving quickly. At present, we recommend that food and farmworkers get the vaccine when they have access to it. We cannot predict whether a booster will be needed, and if a booster is needed, when that will be available, but we can encourage patients to get the best protection presently available, through the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

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## What do I tell a patient about post-vaccination mask wearing and distance?

It's very important that vaccinated people continue to wear masks and maintain physical distance in public. [The CDC's guidance for fully vaccinated people](#) notes that it is low risk for fully vaccinated people to gather, such as family members, without masks or physical distance. However, those vaccinated will still need to observe distancing, mask, sanitation, and ventilation precautions when with unvaccinated people, for the protection of those unvaccinated people.

[According to the CDC](#), COVID-19 vaccines prevent illness, but may not prevent infection -- we don't yet know, because we don't have enough information yet. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 will help prevent your patient from getting very ill, needing hospitalization, or dying from COVID-19, as the research indicates. But we don't yet have the science to understand how effective the vaccines are at preventing individuals from spreading the virus.

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## What if a patient who has received both COVID-19 vaccine shots has been exposed to COVID-19? Is quarantine required?

According to the CDC, patients who have received both COVID-19 vaccine shots are NOT required to quarantine if exposed to someone with COVID-19.

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## What if a patient has had COVID-19? Do they need to get vaccinated?

[The CDC notes](#) that patients who have had COVID-19 (and therefore have antibodies) should wait 90 days from the end of their infection before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Read more about why in this [Health](#) article.

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## What do I do if my patient or my patient's community is encountering misinformation about the vaccine?

Patients are concerned about the safety of the vaccine and much misinformation is circulating around. Help the patient understand the safety of the vaccine and how to deconstruct conflicting or confusing health messages that may be misinformation through our interactive guide, "Deconstructing Health Misinformation".

- Interactive Prezi version: <https://prezi.com/view/2zUKL4KGQWaysr1BertD/>
  - Single-page handout version: <https://www.migrantclinician.org/toolsource/resource/deconstructing-health-messages-five-key-questions.html>
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## How can I help my fellow clinicians be informed?

As many communities move from Phase 1A to Phase 1B, it is becoming clear that clinicians continue to be concerned about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines – not just the larger community. Considering the speed of their development and the limited communication efforts, this hesitancy is expected. Thousands of clinicians – many within our network – have shared their COVID-19 vaccination selfies on social media, many with notes on their elation of having the opportunity to be vaccinated. This message is important for both clinical colleagues and the larger community to see. Sharing clinician-centered resources to better inform colleagues may also help ameliorate concerns:

### Resources

- [Q&A: What PCPs Need to Know about COVID-19 Vaccines](#), article co-written by MCN's Chief Medical Officer, Laszlo Madaras, MD, MPH
  - CHA Healthcare's video, [COVID Primer for Primary Care](#)
  - [The New Vaccines, Attitudes Toward Vaccination, and the Biden COVID-19 Task Force](#), Grand Rounds from UCSF
  - CDC's [Clinical Resources for Each COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
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## How can I keep track of vaccination in my region?

Vaccination dashboards are developing. Resources vary in each community. Here are some early national resources:

### Resources

- Johns Hopkins provides a vaccine dashboard: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/vaccines>
  - MCN is part of a new initiative, Resilient American Communities, which is just getting off the ground and will be a resource to watch: <https://resilientamericancommunities.org/>
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## Other Resources

MCN has upcoming online seminars specifically on COVID-19 vaccinations. Watch our Upcoming Webinars page for registration when new seminars are announced:

<https://www.migrantclinician.org/trainings.html>

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This resource is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$1,324,598.00 with 0 percentage financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

