Spread Hope
NOT COVID

# COVID-19 Vaccine Talking Points

Dec. 15, 2020

## A vaccine to prevent COVID-19 is the best hope for ending the pandemic.

- A COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer was approved for use Saturday, Dec. 12. One other vaccine is expected to be approved by mid-December 2020, with additional vaccines being developed.
- Current estimates are that by late Spring 2021 enough vaccine will be available for everyone who is recommended to receive it.
- We will all need to continue preventative measures such as wearing masks, social distancing, and hand washing to reduce the spread of COVID in our communities even as the vaccine begins being administered.

## There is a proven process for developing vaccines.

- The goal of the vaccine-approval process is to end up with a vaccine that is effective (the vaccine works in preventing the illness) and safe (there are no serious side effects or other problems).
- In the United States, this process has produced safe and effective vaccines for the flu, polio, measles, mumps, pertussis and more. The process has saved millions of people from getting sick and dying.

## While scientists worldwide are working to develop a COVID-19 vaccine faster than any vaccine before, they are still following the proven process because there can be no shortcuts to safety.

- COVID-19 vaccine approval will be a medical and scientific approval based entirely on safety and effectiveness data, with any and all political pressure rejected.
- Past research on vaccines has identified potential successful approaches which has reduced the development time for a COVID-19 vaccine.

## Many vaccines are being developed, but some will be ready before others.

- The significant impact of COVID-19 has led to unprecedented, worldwide collaboration among scientists, medical doctors, health and government officials, and manufacturers.
- At first, COVID-19 vaccines will be used under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

## There may be a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccines before the end of 2020, but supply will continually increase in the months that follow.

- Experts are working on how to distribute these limited vaccines in a fair, ethical, and transparent way. Michigan is following the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for prioritization of distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines.
    - The ACIP is a group of medical and public health experts who review data on new and existing vaccines and diseases to make recommendations to the CDC director. ACIP members are selected by the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and include 14 public health experts and one consumer representative.
- Michigan has also obtained input from a stakeholder group of public health and health care leaders, and reviewed correspondence from the public.

## Distribution of the vaccine will be in a phased approach, with an emphasis on both ensuring the continuing functioning of the health care system and essential services in the community and protecting people at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

- These prioritizations may change as more information on vaccine effectiveness and additional vaccination products become available.
- Vaccination in one phase may not be complete before vaccination in another phase begins and will likely overlap.
- The timing of the start of vaccination in a phase is dependent on guidance from CDC and ACIP, the supply of vaccine from the manufacturer, how vaccine is allocated from the federal level to Michigan, and the capacity to administer the vaccine to populations.
- Phases are as follows:
    - **Phase 1A** includes paid and unpaid persons serving in health care settings who have direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and are unable to work from home, as well as residents of long-term care facilities.
    - **Phase 1B** includes some workers in essential and critical industries**,** including workers with unique skill sets such as non-hospital or non-public health laboratories and mortuary services.
    - **Phase 1C** includes individuals age 16 years or older at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness due to underlying medical conditions, and all people 65 years and older.
    - **Phase 2** is a mass vaccination campaign for all individuals 16 years of age or older.

## The COVID-19 vaccine will likely be free or low-cost for Michiganders.

- There will be no out-of-pocket costs to individuals for the vaccine, however, healthcare providers may bill insurance for administrative costs.

## Michiganders are encouraged to learn about the testing and safety data behind the vaccine and make the decision to get vaccinated when available to them.

- The COVID-19 vaccine will require two doses, separated by three or four weeks depending on the manufacturer.
- Michiganders should receive both doses in order to have full protection from the virus. Once the vaccine is received, individuals can sign up for V-Safe through their smart phone to share side effects and to get a reminder about the second dose.
- Individuals who receive the vaccine may experience mild side effects such as low-grade fever, sore arm and fatigue, which indicate that the vaccine is working.
- There is a robust state and national process for tracking vaccines and reporting side effects. VAERS, the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System is a surveillance system that monitors adverse events associated with vaccines.
- To find the location of a COVID-19 vaccine clinic, visit vaccinefinder.org.

## A COVID-19 vaccine, once available, will be part of how we in Michigan spread hope, not COVID.

- Our best protection from COVID-19 will be to complete the vaccine series, once it is available.
- Based on recent statewide research, 66% of Michiganders are "likely" or "very likely" to get a COVID-19 vaccine – 34% of whom would get one "as soon as it is available."
- The common reasons cited for not getting a vaccine as soon as possible involve safety, effectiveness and trust.
- In the coming weeks and months, Michigan will be attempting to overcome these objections, in part, by empowering residents to protect their family and loved ones.
- Among the messages that tested positively in recent surveys include: *Smallpox, polio, now COVID-19: Vaccines have a long history of hope and healing; The COVID-19 vaccine is the first step on our road to recovery; and the COVID-19 vaccine will help all our communities eliminate the virus.*

## If you have questions about vaccines, make sure to seek a trusted source with answers based on medical science.

- There's a lot of media coverage and speculation around when a COVID-19 vaccine or vaccines will be available and how they will work.
- If/when a vaccine is available and if you are eligible to receive it, talk to your health care provider about the benefits and potential risks of getting the vaccine and your medical history.

- Sources for vaccine information based entirely on medical science include IVaccinate.org, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and the CDC.

**Sources:**


- MDHHS: https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_103214---,00.html
  I Vaccinate: https://ivaccinate.org/vaccinations-during-covid-19
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/making-vaccines/prevent-covid
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- HHS: https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/strategy-for-distributing-covid-19-vaccine.pdf