

January 25, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

While the development of COVID-19 vaccines occurred in record time, production and distribution has not been without challenges, resulting in many unanswered questions. Information from public health officials is evolving and there is much we do not know. The California Department of Public Health has developed guidelines to determine which groups are eligible for vaccination, with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health in charge of local distribution. Unfortunately, vaccination appointments are limited for a variety of reasons, including the lack of vaccines available. Public Health Officials are working diligently to correct this. The Student Health Services (SHS) of The Claremont Colleges Services will keep you informed on pertinent information related to vaccinations over the coming weeks and months.

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

Will TCCS SHS provide the vaccine to the TCC community?

The Claremont Colleges' (TCC) goal is to vaccinate all staff and faculty as soon as possible. As a potential way of accomplishing this, TCCS SHS has submitted an application with CalVax to become a vaccination site as part of the California COVID-19 Vaccination Program. SHS is currently awaiting approval from the State of California and then anticipates placing a vaccine order and hopefully receiving a vaccine allocation from state and local public health authorities. Once our application is approved and the supply is provided, SHS will work toward offering a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at The Claremont Colleges (TCC). SHS will be allowed to administer COVID-19 vaccinations only when vaccinations for workers in the education sector are green-lighted by public health officials. This will then allow TCC employees (faculty/staff) to get vaccinated; however, it will not permit vaccinations for students. It is anticipated that most student vaccinations will occur in Phase 2 of Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Vaccine [Prioritization and Allocation](#), though there may be some exceptions to get vaccinated during an earlier phase based on a student's health status and risk factors. We strongly encourage you to get vaccinated sooner if you have the opportunity to do so through the County or other resources.

At some point, will SHS provide vaccines to students?

Once SHS is approved to be a COVID-19 vaccine provider, SHS could provide COVID-19 vaccination in the fall for any students who have not yet been vaccinated (subject to vaccine availability). Also, if booster vaccines are recommended in the future (annually or some other frequency), SHS would look to provide those as well.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Yes. There are many strict protections in place and steps taken during vaccine development to ensure that any vaccine authorized for use is proven to be safe and effective. Vaccine developers are [required to go through a rigorous, multi-stage process](#) including large (phase III) trials that involve tens of thousands of participants. After the clinical trials show that the vaccine is safe and effective, a series of independent reviews and evidence are required to demonstrate efficacy and safety. The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for making sure that FDA-authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

If I had COVID-19 and recovered, should I still get the vaccine?

Yes. Early findings suggest natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long. More studies are needed.

Will the vaccine cause adverse reaction or side effects?

There is a potential for injection site reactions (redness, swelling, and pain) as well as fever, fatigue, headache, chills, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain, and/or joint pain. Similar adverse reactions are commonly seen with other vaccines as well. To ensure the vaccine is effective, it is important that you receive the second dose even if you experience side effects after the first dose.

If I get the vaccine, do I still need to wear a mask and practice social distancing?

Yes. Vaccines may boost your immune system so it is ready to fight the virus if you are exposed, but it is not yet fully understood whether vaccinated people might still be able to transmit the virus. Initially, we will not have enough vaccines to vaccinate everyone who wants it, and the virus will still be in the community. Therefore, wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and frequently washing your hands will help reduce your chance of being exposed to and spreading the virus.

Please note that the vaccine supply is still extremely limited. The County of Los Angeles continues to urge patience as they work urgently with our federal and state partners to expand capacity and supply in the weeks ahead. Please visit the [Prioritization and Allocation](#) webpage for more information on who is currently being offered vaccine and the estimated timeline for each phase.

The information above and new information about vaccines as it becomes available will be on the [ICC COVID-19 website](#). SHS is committed to doing our best to support you and keep you healthy. If you have additional questions, please feel free to email us at SHSrecords@claremont.edu.

Prateek Jindal, DO
Director
Student Health Services

