



samhealth.org/Coronavirus

Frequently asked questions: Coronavirus vaccine

When will Samaritan Health Services receive the vaccine?

Samaritan Health Services is preparing to receive the first shipments of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine the week of Dec. 14 and expects to receive Moderna vaccine by Christmas, pending FDA approval.

How many doses of the vaccine does Samaritan expect to receive?

Samaritan is anticipating it will receive 1,950 doses in the first shipment, followed by a shipment of similar size near the end of the month, and then weekly shipments thereafter.

How is Samaritan storing the vaccine and distributing it throughout its service area?

The Pfizer vaccines must be kept in an ultra-cold freezer at 80 degrees below 0 Celsius (or 112 degrees below 0 Fahrenheit). Samaritan has ultra-cold freezer space on the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center campus for ample amounts of the vaccine, and it will transport the vaccine throughout the system in special containers that use dry ice to keep it at ultra-cold temperatures.

Once the vaccine is removed from ultra-cold storage, it will take 30 minutes to thaw to room temperature before it can be administered. It can be stored at refrigerator temperatures for up to five days after removal from ultra-cold storage.

The Moderna vaccine needs to be stored at 20 degrees below 0 Celsius (or 4 degrees below 0 Fahrenheit).

Who will get the vaccine first?

Health care workers, first responders and residents and staff of long-term care facilities will receive the vaccinations first, as directed by the Centers for Disease Control and Oregon Health Authority. As more vaccine is produced and made available, additional tiers prioritize those at the highest risk for the disease and essential workers followed by the younger and healthier general public in the final phases of distribution.

When will the vaccine be available more broadly within the community?

It has been estimated that it could be in the spring or later before the vaccine is more widely available. The Oregon Health Authority's coronavirus vaccine website at healthoregon.org/COVIDVaccine is the best resource for up-to-date information on vaccine distribution phases. Once coronavirus vaccines are widely available, Samaritan will work with its public and private partners to offer them to everyone in Benton, Lincoln and Linn counties.

How many doses are required and what are the side effects?

Individuals will need two doses of the vaccine, about a month apart, for it to be effective. Side effects in the clinical trials have included fever, headaches and muscle aches.

Why get the vaccine and how effective is the vaccine?

The coronavirus vaccine works with a person's immune system so their body will be ready to fight the virus if they are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least six feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been shown to prevent COVID-19 infection in 94% of recipients.