

**47 Medical Group**  
**COVID-19 Vaccination Frequently Asked Questions for Laughlin Air Force Base**  
**As of 12 January 2020**

**Q 1. How do we collectively slow and defeat the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**A 1.** Get vaccinated. Vaccines work with your immune system, so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Altogether, the wearing of masks, social distancing, following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, and receiving the COVID-19 vaccination helps protect yourself, your loved ones, and others—while collectively defeating the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Q 2. What are some of the common practices to keep you, your loved ones, and your wingmen safe?**

**A 2.**

- Get your COVID-19 vaccination.
- Wash your hands often, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow, and do not spit
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily
- Good health habits include wearing a mask and practicing social distancing can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Remember, some people without symptoms are able to spread the COVID-19
- If you think you have come into contact with someone with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 like symptoms, notify your supervisor, stay home, and contact your health care provider in order to be tested! COVID-19 testing can be done on base at the 47 Medical Group (MDG) and in town at COVID-19 testing sites. Please call the appointment line at 830-298-6333

**Q 3. When is a COVID-19 vaccine going to be available?**

**A 3.** When the vaccine becomes available at Laughlin, the MDG is following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) prioritization guidelines (framework) for distribution. Laughlin AFB will share vaccine details as they become available.

*Source: DHA-IHD. DoD COVID-19 Vaccine Implementation Planning Update Newsletter. 4 November 2020.*

**Q 4. What is an Emergency Use Authorization?**

**A 4.** Drugs and vaccines must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure that only safe and effective products are available to the American public. During public health emergencies, when there is good scientific reason to believe that a product is safe and is likely to treat or prevent disease, the FDA may authorize its use through an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), even if definitive proof of the effectiveness of the drug or vaccine is not known. FDA pre-licensure approval is considered for the treatment or prevention of diseases that are serious.

*Source: MHS Communications Plan. COVID-19 (SARS-COV-2) Prevention – Vaccination Questions and Answers.*

**Q 5. What kind of information will be available to me before I receive the vaccine?**

**A 5.** Each potential recipient of the COVID-19 vaccine will receive a vaccine-specific EUA Fact Sheet, which will provide the following information:

- Basic information on COVID-19, symptoms, and what to discuss with a health care provider before vaccination
- Who should and should not receive the vaccine such as expecting mothers, those with severe allergies or history of reaction to prior vaccinations
- That recipients have the choice to receive the vaccine
- Dosage and vaccine series information
- Risks and benefits of the vaccine
- An explanation of what an EUA is and why it is issued
- Any approved available alternatives for preventing COVID-19
- Additional resources

*Source: CDC. COVID-19 Vaccine Training Modules.*

*<https://www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/covid19/SHVA/10080.asp>*

**Q 6. How many doses of vaccine will I need?**

**A 6.** Current COVID-19 vaccines are given in a two-dose series separated by 21 or 28 days, depending on the product. Vaccines from different manufacturers are not interchangeable. You must receive the same vaccine from the same manufacturer for both doses.

*Source: DHA-IHD. DoD COVID-19 Vaccine Implementation Planning Update Newsletter. 4 November 2020.*

**Q 7. How will I be able to keep track of what vaccine I received and when I need to get a second dose?**

**A 7.** All vaccine recipients will be provided a copy of the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card after receipt of the vaccine. At the time of the first vaccination, the 47 MDG will supply the date and time of the second-dose appointment or instructions provided on procedures for the second dose. It is recommended you take a photo of the vaccination record card with your smartphone as a back-up copy and set a calendar reminder for receipt of the second dose.

**Q 8. If I have already recovered from the COVID-19 infection, do I need to be vaccinated?**

**A 8.** Because the duration of immunity from natural infection with COVID-19 is unknown, a COVID-19 vaccine may have value in protecting people who have already had the disease. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last long, but more studies are needed to understand this better. Talk with your provider if you have been previously infected with COVID-19.

*Source: CDC. Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination.*

*<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>*

**Q 9. If I get vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask and practice social distancing?**

**A 9.** Masks and physical distancing will still be necessary until a large proportion of the population is vaccinated, and the vaccine is proven to provide long-term protection. Global and national public health authorities are expected to continue to recommend wearing masks and practicing physical distancing for everyone until the pandemic risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

*Source: MHS Communications Plan. COVID-19 (SARS-COV-2) Prevention – Vaccination Questions and Answers.*

**Q 10. Are certain people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19?**

**A 10.** The risk for severe illness and death from COVID-19 increases with age, with the greatest risk among those aged 85 or older. Adults of any age with the following conditions are also at increased risk of severe illness: Cancer; chronic kidney disease, COPD; heart disease; weakened immune system; obesity; pregnancy; sickle cell disease; smoking; and type 2 diabetes mellitus. COVID-19 is a new disease. There are currently limited data and information about the impact of many underlying medical conditions and whether they increase risk. Talk with your provider about your individual risk factors and appropriate precautions.

*Sources: CDC. Older Adults. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/older-adults.html>*

*CDC. People with Certain Medical Conditions. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>*

**Q 11. How do we know if the vaccine is safe? How will you monitor and track the vaccine side effects?**

**A 11.** The DoD is confident in the stringent regulatory process and requirements of the FDA. Manufacturers are required to submit their raw data for the FDA to review. Safety, immune response, and efficacy data from the trial stages are submitted to the FDA before they are authorized for use and distribution. Per FDA requirements, the DoD will be monitoring and tracking reports of vaccine side effects through various surveillance activities, both internal and external to the DoD.

**Q 12. Will the DoD provide vaccines for civilian employees and contractor staff working in military hospitals or clinics? How about working on installation or in depots and arsenals?**

**A 12.** The DoD will offer vaccines to civilian and contractor staff with direct patient care and those who normally receive vaccines for occupational health purposes, as authorized according to DoD regulation.

**Q 13. Will TRICARE beneficiaries, including military retirees, have access to the vaccine?**

**A 13.** Yes, based on DoD prioritization. While there is limited vaccine availability, vaccination distribution prioritization will focus on those providing direct medical care, maintaining essential national security and installation functions, deploying forces, and those beneficiaries at the highest risk for developing severe illness from COVID-19. TRICARE beneficiaries empaneled at a DoD Military Treatment Facility (MTF) are eligible to receive the vaccine at a DoD MTF. TRICARE beneficiaries who receive care at DoD MTFs on a space-available basis can alternately receive their vaccine through the local civilian network.

**Q 14. When we move from an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to a fully licensed vaccine, will the DoD make the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory like the yearly influenza vaccine?**

**A 14.** When formally licensed by the FDA, a vaccine may become mandatory for military personnel, as is the case for the influenza vaccine.

**Q 15. How did you determine the priorities for receiving the vaccine?**

**A 15.** The DoD follows the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the CDC's recommendations as much as possible. CDC recommendations, in addition to input from Service leaders, the United States Coast Guard, and Joint Staff resulted in the current DoD priorities for vaccination.

**Q 16. How will the DoD track personnel who receive a COVID-19 vaccine?**

**A 16.** Everyone who receives a COVID-19 Vaccine will be tracked through existing medical record

reporting systems.

**Q 17. How do I know when and where to get vaccinated?**

**A 17.** Vaccination distribution prioritization will focus on those providing direct medical care, maintaining essential national security and installation functions, deploying forces, and those at the highest risk for developing severe illness from COVID-19 before other members of the DoD population. The 47 MDG is in direct collaboration with each Unit at Laughlin AFB to ensure an effective vaccine rollout based upon the DoD's prioritization schedule. You will be notified when the vaccine is available to you and the date, time and location to receive the vaccine. To the greatest extent possible, beneficiaries in priority groups who are enrolled at MTFs should come to the MTF to be vaccinated. This will ensure the maximum number of vaccine opportunities exist in the non-DoD population. TRICARE beneficiaries who receive care at DoD MTFs on a space-available basis can alternately receive the vaccine through the local civilian network.

**Q 18. Should children get the vaccine?**

**A 18.** The current vaccine trials have not studied the safety and efficacy for children, and manufacturers are not currently asking the FDA for authorization to vaccinate children

**Q 19. How long will the protection last following vaccination?**

**A 19.** We do not know how long protection will last following vaccination. It will be critically important to measure long-term protection (at least two years) in the phase 3 trials and in other groups prioritized for early vaccination. We are still learning about the duration of protection following infection with COVID-19, and it is too early to tell how long protection will last.

**Q 20. Can someone get COVID-19 from the vaccine?**

**A 20.** No, it is not possible to get COVID-19 from vaccines. Vaccines against COVID-19 use an inactivated virus, parts of the virus, or a gene from the virus. None of these can cause COVID-19.

**Q 21. Will the DoD require all service members to receive the vaccine?**

**A 21.** No. The vaccine will be offered on a voluntary basis. Priority populations are highly encouraged to receive the vaccine. When formally licensed by the FDA, the DoD may require a vaccine for military personnel or personnel in specific fields, as is the case for the influenza vaccine.

**Q 22. Why should we receive the first-available vaccine when there are several other vaccines still in trials?**

**A 22.** People who are offered the first-available vaccine are in groups that are most in need of COVID-19 protection. Vaccinated people will be protecting themselves and their families and all people with whom they interact. Evaluation of the first-available vaccine will continue, even after its pre-licensure release. People who will be offered the first-available vaccine will be encouraged to receive this vaccine.

**Q 23. How will the 48-hour verbal DNIF work for flyers at Laughlin AFB?**

**A 23.** Flyers will be provided a verbal 48-hour DNIF and do not require any paperwork or DD Form 2992.

**Q 24. Will I be given departing information or instructions after my COVID vaccination?**

**A 24.** Yes, you will be provided with information and instructions, to include receiving the second dose, when you receive the COVID-19 vaccine from the 47 MDG.

**Q 25. Will I be required to perform Restriction of Movement (ROM)?**

**A 25.** Currently, there are no ROM requirements for members after they receive the vaccine.

**Q 26. What if I become sick after receiving the vaccination?**

**A 26.** If you feel unwell after receiving your COVID-19 vaccine, please contact the 47 MDG's Main Appointment Line at 830-298-6333 to be connected to a Nurse or Provider. If the 47 MDG is closed, please contact the Nurse Advice Line, 24/7, at 1-800-874-2273. If you become unwell to the point of risking life, limb, or eyesight, or feel it is an emergency, please dial 911 for immediate medical assistance.

**Q 27. Am I allowed taking leave between the vaccination dosages?**

**A 27.** There is no reason that personnel cannot take leave; however, they must be back in time for the second dose.

**Q 28. Why do I have to decline the voluntary COVID-19 vaccination in person?**

**A 28.** Members wishing to decline the vaccination must do so in person at the time of the vaccine to ensure health counseling and documentation in the member's medical records.

**Q 29. What are the common side-effects?**

**A 29.** "In clinical studies, adverse reactions in participants 16 years of age and older included pain at the injection site (84.1%), fatigue (62.9%), headache (55.1%), muscle pain (38.3%), chills (31.9%), joint pain (23.6%), fever (14.2%), injection site swelling (10.5%), injection site redness (9.5%), nausea (1.1%), malaise (0.5%), and lymphadenopathy (0.3%)"

Sources: CDC <https://www.cvdvaccine-us.com/safety>