



Miami Jewish Health

December 15, 2020

Dear Resident/Family Members,

By now, you have probably learned that the COVID-19 vaccines will soon be ready for distribution to residents and employees of long-term care facilities. We have long awaited this exciting news.

Our residents and employees are, and have always been, our number one concern, so we're doing everything we can to help facilitate the vaccination process. We have been selected by the State of Florida to receive the COVID-19 vaccine for nursing home residents and employees as early as this week. Our social work team has begun contacting families directly to provide more information and answer any questions you may have. My team will administer vaccines to those who consent.

We understand that some of you may be concerned about the safety of these new vaccines, as they have been developed and tested far more quickly than those in the past. The speed with which these vaccines were developed is not due to skipping necessary safety steps but rather the result of focused, collaborative work performed by experts across the globe. Vaccines approved for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have undergone the same level of rigorous testing for safety and efficacy as other vaccines and have been tested in tens of thousands of people, including older adults. Two independent advisory committees of experts from academic institutions also monitor vaccines to ensure their safety.

Most of the COVID-19 vaccines require two separate doses given about three or four weeks apart. Participants of clinical trials have reported experiencing short-term side effects after being vaccinated, with more pronounced discomfort after the second dose. These possible side effects include headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever, and pain at the injection site. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding about the cause of these reactions, as you may have heard someone say a vaccine has "made them sick" or given them the disease that the vaccine was intended to prevent. The COVID-19 vaccine cannot give you a COVID-19 infection. The vaccine works by helping the body create antibodies to fight off the virus. Feeling discomfort after getting the vaccine means that the vaccine is doing its job and your body is making antibodies.

I encourage you to reach out to us if you still have any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, its possible side effects, and what to expect after you or a loved one receives it. As we have been saying throughout this challenging year, we are all in this together. We are confident that the worldwide, unprecedented scientific achievement of these COVID-19 vaccines will eventually enable us to enjoy life with our loved ones again.

Sincerely,

Shaun Corbett, MD
Chief Medical Officer

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