

## ANSWERS TO YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE QUESTIONS

**Q: Why is vaccination important?**

**A:** It will better protect you, your family and friends, SALMON Residents, co-workers, and your community from COVID-19.

**Q: Are the vaccines effective and safe?**

**A:** Both of the FDA-approved vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) do **NOT** contain the live COVID-19 virus; they use mRNA.

- mRNA technology has been used in cancer treatment for more than ten years.
- mRNA will **NOT** give you COVID-19 or change your DNA.
- Vaccine trials tested a combined 65,000+ individuals (the typical trial has 3,000 participants) with 33% racially diverse and almost 40% older adults (age 56-85).
- Overall effectiveness to prevent COVID-19: Pfizer-95.0%, Moderna-94.1%, with the same results in different race, ethnicity and age groups.

**Q: What should I expect when I get the vaccine?**

**A:** Up to one in ten people will experience short-term discomfort: fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and pain at the injection site after vaccination. Side effects may last for 24-48 hours. Any side effects, or short-term discomfort is normal, common and expected.

**Q: Hasn't the development of this vaccine been done too quickly?**

**A:** No, the FDA did not change their standards, and no steps were skipped in the development of this vaccine. There was a global effort with nearly unlimited cooperation and resources (money, knowledge, manpower, and technology) that quickened the development of this vaccine, however **no steps were skipped in the safety evaluation process.**

**Q: When and how long will the vaccine protect me?**

**A:** The vaccine requires two doses, three to four weeks apart. Protection occurs one to two weeks after the second dose. Longevity of the vaccine's protection is still being assessed; as we learn more, we will continue to inform our staff and Residents accordingly. Similar to the flu shot, this may include the possibility of additional vaccine/s each year.

**Q: What if I already had COVID-19?**

**A:** It is still safe to get the vaccine. The vaccine could provide longer or better protection against the disease.

**Vaccines are the only way to better control the spread of the COVID-19 virus. When learning how effective and safe the vaccine is, everyone should make an educated and informed decision to get vaccinated in order to increase herd immunity and help get back to pre-pandemic life.**

**“** I am very excited that the COVID-19 vaccine will be available to our Residents and Staff. During the current pandemic, this opportunity presents a light at the end of the tunnel. I personally look forward to accepting this vaccine. **”**

Best,



Deborah J. Freedman, RN, BSN, MS  
*Director of Clinical Services*