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April 2021

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COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility

The COVID-19 Vaccine is now eligible for all Wisconsinites over the age of 16.

We strongly recommend you get vaccinated. The vaccine will help protect you from getting COVID-19. By getting vaccinated, you protect yourself and reduce the risk of infecting your family, friends and co-workers.

If you are an Access patient, please contact Access at (608) 443-5480 to schedule your appointment or talk to your doctor or dentist about scheduling a vaccination at your next appointment.



A Message from Ken Loving, MD



One year ago, Access began navigating the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus. We made significant changes in how we provided care for our patients. We created a respiratory clinic at our William T. Evjue location for patients who had symptoms of COVID-19 and needed testing or essential medical care. Our dental clinics saw only people

with urgent needs. Our behavioral health team began providing most of their services by telephone.

During the early stages of the pandemic there were fewer appointments available. Since then, we have expanded our services so that patients can get the care they need. The medical teams are providing about the same number of appointments as before the pandemic. Our dental teams are increasing appointments for preventive care and treatment and have adopted rigorous safety standards. Our behavioral health team is working hard to meet the increasing demand for their services and helping patients confront the stress and anxiety of the pandemic.

Safety remains our highest priority. We follow the recommendations from national, state, and local experts. Our staff always uses the appropriate Personalized Protective Equipment (PPE) when caring for patients. We have brought in experts to help us improve air flow

in our clinics. We require that all staff and patients wear appropriate masks, follow physical distancing guidelines and we limit the number of visitors who can accompany patients to appointments. We are pleased that our clinics are safe and encourage our patients not to delay care.

This has been a challenging year and the pandemic is not over. We remain committed to caring for our current patients and growing to care for more people in the community who need Access as a health care home.

The availability of vaccines for all people age 16 and over in Wisconsin is a sign of hope. We are receiving weekly vaccine supplies from the state and have been immunizing staff and patients. We are answering questions and helping people understand the importance of the vaccine. We are following the state's guidelines and soon more people will be eligible to receive the vaccine. Please visit our website at accesscommunityhealthcenters.org/covid-19-vaccine-update for the latest updates on our vaccination efforts.

Our providers and clinical staff are here to help you in any way possible. Please reach out to us if you have questions or need assistance.

Thank you for putting your trust in us and allowing us to care for you during this difficult time. We will get through this together.



Q&A About COVID-19 Vaccinations

As the vaccine rollout continues in our community, Access Chief Medical Officer Kevin Fehr, MD, helps answer a few important questions you may have about the vaccines or the vaccination process:

Should I get vaccinated for COVID-19?

Absolutely. I strongly recommend you get vaccinated. The vaccine will help protect you from getting COVID-19. By getting vaccinated, you can protect yourself and reduce the risk of infecting your family, friends and co-workers.

How do I know if COVID-19 vaccine is safe?

Please know that all COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. There have been no serious safety concerns. The Centers for Disease Control continues to monitor the vaccines to look for any safety issues now that they are being given.

If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes. It is important to still get vaccinated, because you can catch the virus more than once. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, it isn't known how long this lasts.

Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?

Yes. The vaccine is especially important for people with underlying health problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity. People who have these conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Will the shot hurt or make me sick?

There may be side effects, but they should go away within a few days. In fact, side effects are signs that the vaccine is working to build immunity. Some side effects that you may experience include: a sore arm; headache; fever; or body aches. Please know, this does not mean you have COVID-19. If your side effects don't go away in a week, please call your doctor.

Community Resources Are Available

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our community in many ways. If you or someone you know needs help, please contact our Community Resource Specialists at (608) 443-5480 to schedule an appointment. They can connect you with the resources you need. Additionally, the following organizations can also offer assistance.

- **Porchlight Men's Shelter:**
Shelter Phone: (608) 243-0232
- **Salvation Army Women/Family Shelter:**
(608) 250-2200
- **Tenant Resource Center:**
(608) 257-0006
- **Community Action Coalition**
(Food Security, Housing Security, Life Skills):
(608) 246-4730
- **The River Food Pantry:**
(608) 442-8815
- **St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry:**
(608) 257-0919
- **Madison Senior Center:**
(608) 266-6581;
email: seniorcenter@cityofmadison.com.
- **United Way Get Help:**
2-1-1

New ACA Open Enrollment Period Announced

Due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, there will be an open enrollment period for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Enrollment will take place from February 15 – August 15 for both renewals and new applicants. Our Community Resource staff can assist you with signing up for coverage. Call (608) 443-5480 to schedule an appointment.

All of Us and COVID-19 Research



Since 2018, Access has partnered with the All of Us Research Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to better understand why people get sick or stay healthy.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, All of Us Research Coordinators were on site at our Joyce & Marshall Erdman Clinic to recruit and enroll patients in the program. To date, more than 271,000 people nationwide have participated in the program, with more than 50 percent representing all racial and ethnic populations.

If you enroll in the program now, you can help in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The All of Us Program is contributing to COVID-19 research in three areas:

- **Antibody Testing**
All of Us will test blood samples from 10,000 or more participants. The tests will look at the level of COVID-19 exposure across regions and communities.
- **COVID-19 Participant Experience (COPE) Survey**
All of Us is using an online survey to better understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on peoples' physical and mental health. The survey is designed for participants who have been ill with COVID-19 and those who have not. Questions focus on COVID-19 symptoms, stress, social distancing and economic impacts.
- **Electronic Health Records**
More than 200,000 people with COVID-19 or related symptoms have shared their electronic health records with the program so far. This provides information about COVID-19 symptoms and related health problems, as well as how different medicines and treatments work.

For more information about the All of Us program or to enroll, please visit [Allofus.wisc.edu](https://allofus.wisc.edu). In-person activities are paused due to the pandemic, but online enrollment and activities are still available. Questions? Please contact the All of Us at UW-Madison local team at (888) 294-2661 or allofus@hslc.wisc.edu.