

COVID-19 Update

May 27: Antibody Testing in Vaccinated Individuals, Workforce App Update and Masking Guidelines in NM Administrative Buildings Modified For Those Fully Vaccinated

Today's issue features Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidance on antibody testing in vaccinated individuals and a reminder to update your NM Workforce app for easier access to your COVID-19 vaccination record. It also includes new masking guidelines that will be implemented on June 1 in Northwestern Medicine administrative buildings for fully vaccinated individuals.

ANTIBODY TESTING IN VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS

Earlier this month, the FDA issued a safety communication informing the public that results from SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests should not be used to evaluate immunity or protection from COVID-19 at any time, and especially after the person has received a COVID-19 vaccine. All NM physicians are strongly encouraged to not order antibody testing in patients who have been vaccinated.

The authorized vaccines for prevention of COVID-19 induce antibodies to specific viral protein targets, and post-vaccination antibody test results will be negative in individuals without a history of previous natural infection if the test used does not detect the type of antibodies induced by the vaccine.

Currently **authorized SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests** are not validated to evaluate immunity or protection from COVID-19 infection. SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests should be ordered only by healthcare providers who are familiar with the use and limitations of the test.

Related Information

- [Antibody Testing Is Not Currently Recommended to Assess Immunity After COVID-19 Vaccination: FDA Safety Communication](#)
- [In Vitro Diagnostics EUAs – Serology and Other Adaptive Immune Response Tests for SARS-CoV-2](#)
- [Antibody \(Serology\) Testing for COVID-19: Information for Patients and Consumers](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidelines for Antibody Testing](#)

For more information about antibody testing at NM, please review the [May 13 COVID-19 Update](#) or contact Medical Director of Clinical Chemistry Gregory S. Retzinger, MD, PhD, at gretzing@nm.org or 312.926.2258.

REMINDER: UPDATE YOUR WORKFORCE APP

The latest NM Workforce app update makes accessing your COVID-19 vaccination record easier. Once updated, the app will display a new tile: **COVID-19 Vaccination Record**. When selected, the tile will display an electronic copy of your COVID-19 vaccine information, including:

- Name of vaccine manufacturer
- Lot number
- Date received
- Location received

Please make sure to update your **NM Workforce app** to access this new feature.

Please note that all NM policies for building access and safety protocols remain in place across the health system, and completion of the Symptom Check prior to entering an NM building is still required.

MASKING GUIDELINES IN NM ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS MODIFIED FOR FULLY VACCINATED

Throughout the pandemic, NM has relied on science based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Therefore, beginning Tuesday, June 1, Northwestern Medicine (NM) will no longer require fully vaccinated individuals to wear masks in non-direct patient care buildings and administrative spaces where direct patient care is not provided such as:

- 213 Front Street
- Keystone
- Q Center Winfield Town Center
- Snyder Building
- 371 Schmale Support Services Building
- 541 N. Fairbanks
- 211 E. Ontario
- 680 N. Lake Shore Drive in IT and Revenue Cycle Suites only
- Conference Centers in hospital buildings, such as the third floor of Feinberg Pavilion, the second floor of Lake Forest Hospital or the Conference Center at Central DuPage Hospital
- All NM parking structures

Fully vaccinated individuals no longer are required to stay physically distanced, but building capacities driven by the “A-B seating model” will remain in effect until state and local officials lift the capacity restrictions, which is expected in the next several weeks.

Removing your mask in the areas specified above should align with both your vaccination status and personal comfort level as we adjust to the changes recommended by CDC and supported by science.

Where masks still need to be worn

Masks continue to be required in locations where direct patient care is provided such as patient care units, physician offices and diagnostic centers. Employees who are not fully vaccinated must continue to wear masks in all NM buildings.

Workforce vaccination opportunities

Those who are not yet vaccinated now have two options to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Employees can receive the Johnson & Johnson or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, as outlined below.

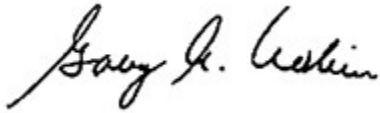
- **Beginning June 7**, staff who are 18 and older can receive the **Johnson & Johnson** COVID-19 vaccine at any **Immediate Care Center** across the NM system without an appointment.

The Immediate Care Centers are open from 8:00 am to 7:45 pm, seven days a week. Visit the [Locations page on nm.org](#) to find an NM Immediate Care location near you.

- **Beginning June 8**, staff who are 16 and older can make an appointment to receive the **Pfizer** COVID-19 vaccine series at **four NM Occupational Health clinics**. A parent or guardian must accompany anyone under 18 years of age. Please note that walk-in vaccination is not an option and staff should call the appropriate location to schedule an appointment after June 7:
 - Lake Forest Hospital — 312.694.0800
 - Delnor Hospital — 312.694.0800
 - Northwestern Memorial Hospital — 312.926.8282
 - McHenry Hospital — 815.759.4224

As the CDC and public health officials modify guidelines, NM will review and update its policies accordingly.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our *Patients First* mission. With vaccine supply readily available, please encourage your patients to get vaccinated.



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