

COVID-19 Update

May 6: National Vaccination Campaign and Visitor Policy Update

*Today's issue features an update on patient vaccination and Northwestern Medicine's involvement in the national **Get the Vaccine to Save Lives** campaign. It also includes changes to the diagnostic testing, outpatient facilities and Immediate Care Center patient visitor policy, which will go into effect May 10 at all NM facilities except those in Streeterville, as well as updates to the inpatient visitor policy.*

GET THE VACCINE TO SAVE LIVES CAMPAIGN

NM has joined a coalition of top hospitals and healthcare institutions on a nationwide campaign: **Get the Vaccine to Save Lives**. The campaign's goal is to reassure the public that vaccines are safe, effective and necessary to achieve herd immunity and a return to pre-pandemic activities.

The campaign is targeting adults who are hesitant to receive a vaccine. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation survey published March 30, 17% of respondents said they will take a wait-and-see approach before getting vaccinated, and another 20% indicated they will never get the vaccine or will only get it if required. This represents a significant portion of the population, complicating efforts to achieve herd immunity and putting everyone at risk.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **reports** that more than 249 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in the U.S., and 32% of the population is fully vaccinated. Learn more about the campaign at ourshot2savelives.org.

As of May 3, more than 113,879 patients and employees have been fully vaccinated by Northwestern Medicine. All NM patients age 16 and older may now schedule COVID-19 vaccination appointments through their MyNM account or by calling the **COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline at 312.694.6600**. The Food and Drug Administration is expected to authorize use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in adolescents 12 to 15 years old within the next several days.

The following patient vaccination resources are available to assist you in discussions with patients:

- **COVID-19 Safety and Effectiveness FAQ** on nm.org/covid-19 can answer most general patient questions about the vaccine.
- The **COVID-19 Patient Vaccination Records** guidelines can assist patients with accessing CDC vaccination cards.
- Information and tip sheets regarding patient vaccination at NM are available in the **Patient Vaccine Toolkit** on Physician Forum and **NM Interactive** (login required).

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING, OUTPATIENT AND ICC VISITOR POLICY UPDATES

Visitor policies continue to evolve at Northwestern Medicine to ensure a safe, trusted and comfortable care environment for all patients, visitors, physicians and staff. To align with recent changes to the inpatient visitor policy, NM also has updated its diagnostic testing, outpatient and Immediate Care Center visitor policy.

Starting Monday, May 10, the following visitor policies will be in effect at all NM facilities:

Diagnostic testing, outpatient facilities and Immediate Care Centers

- **One companion is permitted** at Northwestern Medicine physician clinics, outpatient departments and diagnostic testing areas.
 - Exception: Due to physical-distancing constraints, **companions are not permitted at Northwestern Medicine Streeterville** physician clinics, outpatient departments and diagnostic testing areas.
- **One companion is permitted** at all Northwestern Medicine Immediate Care Centers regardless of location.
- Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the clinical care team. Exceptions include:
 - Patients under the age of 18 (limited to two companions age 18 and older)
 - Patients requiring transportation home after an outpatient visit (limited to one companion)
 - Patients with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation for assistance (limited to one companion age 18 or older)

Inpatient facilities and emergency departments

- **One designated visitor at a time may be in a patient's room** during visiting hours for inpatients not being treated for COVID-19. Inpatient waiting rooms remain closed. Additional visitors are allowed, but will need to wait in approved locations (these vary by hospital), such as:
 - Second floor of Feinberg or Galter Pavilion (Northwestern Memorial Hospital)
 - Hospital cafeterias
 - Personal vehicles
 - Outside the hospital
- Patients in the **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Pediatric Intensive Care Unit may have two designated** visitors 18 and older who are wearing ID bands.
- Patients at Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital may have two designated visitors over the course of a patient's stay. [Download this PDF for more information.](#)
- Patients in **emergency departments** who are not being treated or tested for COVID-19 may have **one visitor**. Visitors may be asked to wait in a public lobby or in their car until the patient is in an exam room.
- **Patients in labor may have two support people**, one of whom may be a doula, in their delivery room. Two visitors are allowed during visiting hours for patients who are postpartum.
- **Visitors must check in at the front desk, present a state- or federal-issued photo ID, be screened for COVID-19 and wear a visitor badge** indicating that they have been screened.
- **Visitors must be masked at all times**, including in the patient's room. Visitors are not permitted to eat or drink in patient rooms, as it would require periodic unmasking. Visitors who do not comply with the masking policy may be asked to leave.
- **No visitors are allowed for patients being evaluated for COVID-19** until a COVID-19 infection is excluded.

- **All visitors must be 18 or older.** Exceptions will be made if a patient's parent is younger than 18.

Outside of designated visiting hours, which vary by hospital, visitors are not allowed, with the following exceptions:

- Patients under the age of 18 may have one visitor.
- Postpartum patients may have one visitor.
- Patients in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or Pediatric Intensive Care Unit may have two visitors.
- Patients in need of a compassionate exception, including those desiring pastoral care visits and those at the end of life, may have more than two visitors, at the discretion of the clinical care team.
- Patients with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation for assistance may have two support persons, one at a time.

NM visitor policies are subject to change during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please consult the **Visitor Restriction Due to COVID-19 page** on nm.org/visitors for current policies and visiting hours at each hospital and outpatient facility.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our *Patients First* mission. Please continue to encourage your patients to get vaccinated.



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