



## ***Frequently Asked Questions / COVID-19 Vaccination Calls and Messages***

**Q: I saw that Southcoast Health is making vaccines available to the public. When and how can I get my shot?**

- Southcoast's public vaccination program is under way, with three sites located in the Greater Fall River, Greater New Bedford (Dartmouth), and Greater Wareham areas.
- Southcoast is strictly adhering to Massachusetts guidelines on eligibility, and we're currently vaccinating people 75 and older, as per **Phase 2-Group 1** requirements of the state's rollout.
- Vaccinations are by appointment only, and individuals are selected via lottery process to receive randomly generated invitations to schedule these appointments. **The number of appointments made available depends entirely on the vaccine supply Southcoast is allocated by the Commonwealth. The invitation is non-transferrable.**
- One very important step you can take now is to ensure you have a MyChart account, as invitations will **be randomly generated and sent from MyChart, followed by other modes of communication**. If you do not have a MyChart account, please create one at [Southcoast.org](https://mychart.southcoast.org) (phone)/<https://mychart.southcoast.org/mychart/signup> (email).
- ***If you have an existing Southcoast Health MyChart account, or once you've activated one, you need not take further action.*** You will receive communications from MyChart and Southcoast alerting you to your randomly generated invitation to schedule a time and location.
- Please note that the Commonwealth is the administrative authority on vaccination in Massachusetts and is responsible for allocating supply. Southcoast is a facilitator along with other hospitals, health systems, municipalities, and community organizations.
- Southcoast's goal is to vaccinate as many people as possible as efficiently and fairly as possible, and we are doing everything in our power to provide the region's residents with this safe and effective shot.

**Q: Are Rhode Island patients able to receive vaccinations at Southcoast sites?**

- Yes, if you are randomly selected via lottery process and receive an invitation to schedule.

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## Q: Do I have any other options for vaccination besides Southcoast?

- Yes. The Commonwealth is the administrative authority on vaccinations in Massachusetts. The state has established large public vaccination sites and is working with municipalities and organizations on smaller sites.
- **THE MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19 LINE IS 211 AND IS SCHEDULING AT STATE SITES.**
- There are also commercial pharmacies making vaccination appointments available.
- Please visit [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations) (phone)/<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations> (email).
- Again, Southcoast's goal is to vaccinate as many people as possible as efficiently and fairly as possible, and we are doing everything in our power to provide the region's residents with this safe and effective shot.
- We hope to scale up our number of appointments made available in the coming weeks – based on the vaccine supply we receive from the state – and will keep the community updated.

## Q: I am still a little undecided on whether to get the vaccine for myself and loved ones. Can you help me understand whether it's safe?

- The COVID-19 vaccine is safe, and it works. It is already saving lives, slowing community spread, and decreasing hospitalizations. Side effects are rare and typically minor. The vaccine contains no live virus and does not enter the nucleus of the cell. **We strongly recommend you receive the vaccine, as it could save your life and others'.**
- While awaiting vaccination, and even after being vaccinated, please stay safe by wearing a mask whenever you're in a public area, staying at least 6 feet away from people with whom you do not live, washing and sanitizing your hands regularly, and refraining from touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- **IMPORTANT:** Even after being vaccinated, we urge patients to continue wearing a face covering or mask. We are encouraging everyone to wear a mask in public and to contribute to a shared national effort of saving every possible life. When you protect yourself and your loved ones, you are also protecting our frontline healthcare heroes.
- For more information on the science behind the vaccine, please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov), and [Southcoast.org](https://www.southcoast.org).

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## Q: Who else will be eligible in Phase 2, in addition to those 75 and older?

Listed in order of priority (**February-March 2021**):

- **Phase 2-Group 1:** [Individuals age 75+](#)

### **NOT YET ELIGIBLE IN PHASE 2 ...**

- **Phase 2-Group 2:** Individuals age 65+, individuals with [2+ certain medical conditions](#) (only those conditions listed as at increased risk for severe illness), and/or [residents and staff of low income and affordable senior housing](#).
- **Phase 2-Group 3:** Other workers, including ...
  - Early education/daycare, K-12, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, restaurant and cafe workers;
  - Employees across the food, beverages, agriculture, consumer goods, retail, and foodservice sectors;
  - Meatpackers;
  - Sanitation, public works and public health workers;
  - Vaccine development workers;
  - Food pantry workers and volunteers;
  - Transit/transportation: Uber/Lyft/ride share services/pharmacy delivery drivers, workers in the passenger ground transportation industry (e.g. paratransit for people with disabilities, food delivery, non-urgent medical transport), Massport workers other than police, airline workers;
  - Convenience store workers (under grocery workers);
  - Water and wastewater utility staff
  - Court system workers (judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, clerks), other than court officers who are listed under first responders
  - Medical supply chain workers
  - Workers at manufacturers (including biotechnology companies and those companies that have shifted production to medical supplies), materials and parts suppliers, technicians, logistics and warehouse operators, printers, packagers, distributors of medical products and equipment (including third party logistics providers, and those who test and repair), personal protective equipment (PPE), isolation barriers, medical gases, pharmaceuticals (including materials used in radioactive drugs), dietary supplements, commercial health products, blood and blood products, vaccines, testing materials, laboratory supplies, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting or sterilization supplies (including dispensers), sanitary goods, personal care products, pest control products, and tissue and paper towel products.
  - Funeral directors and funeral workers
  - Shipping port and terminal workers

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- **Phase 2-Group 4: Individuals with one [certain medical condition](#)**

Adults of any age with **certain underlying medical conditions** are at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. Severe illness from COVID-19 is defined as hospitalization, admission to the ICU, intubation or mechanical ventilation, or death.

Adults of any age with the following conditions **are at increased risk** of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19:

- [Cancer](#)
- [Chronic kidney disease](#)
- [COPD \(chronic obstructive pulmonary disease\)](#)
- [Down Syndrome](#)
- [Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies](#)
- [Immunocompromised state \(weakened immune system\) from solid organ transplant](#)
- [Obesity \(body mass index \[BMI\] of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher but < 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>\)](#)
- [Severe Obesity \(BMI ≥ 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>\)](#)
- [Pregnancy](#)
- [Sickle cell disease](#)
- [Smoking](#)
- [Type 2 diabetes mellitus](#)

COVID-19 is a new disease. Currently there are limited data and information about the impact of many underlying medical conditions on the risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on what we know at this time, adults of any age with the following conditions **might be at an increased risk** for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19:

- [Asthma \(moderate-to-severe\)](#)
- [Cerebrovascular disease \(affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain\)](#)
- [Cystic fibrosis](#)
- [Hypertension or high blood pressure](#)
- [Immunocompromised state \(weakened immune system\) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines](#)
- [Neurologic conditions, such as dementia](#)
- [Liver disease](#)
- [Overweight \(BMI > 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, but < 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>\)](#)
- [Pulmonary fibrosis \(having damaged or scarred lung tissues\)](#)
- [Thalassemia \(a type of blood disorder\)](#)
- [Type 1 diabetes mellitus](#)

[Want to see the evidence behind these lists?](#)

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While [children](#) have been less affected by COVID-19 compared to adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 and some children develop severe illness. Children with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness compared to children without underlying medical conditions. Current evidence on which underlying medical conditions in children are associated with increased risk is limited. Children with the following conditions might be at increased risk for severe illness: obesity, medical complexity, severe genetic disorders, severe neurologic disorders, inherited metabolic disorders, sickle cell disease, congenital (since birth) heart disease, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, asthma and other chronic lung disease, and immunosuppression due to malignancy or immune-weakening medications.

We do not yet know who is at increased risk for developing the rare but serious complication associated with COVID-19 in children called Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C), nor do we know what causes MIS-C. Learn about [MIS-C](#).

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## RESOURCES

<https://mychart.southcoast.org/mychart/signup>

<https://mychart.southcoast.org/mychart/Authentication/Login>

<https://www.southcoast.org/covid-vaccine/>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>