NYC
Health

New Yorkers with HIV Are Now Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 remains a significant risk in New York City (NYC) and across the U.S. Vaccination, along with other prevention measures, can help us end the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Get Vaccinated
Vaccines are very effective at preventing COVID-19, a disease which can lead to hospitalization and death and cause long-term health problems.

All people with HIV who live in New York State (NYS) are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. For a list of groups currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in NYS, visit **nyc.gov/covidvaccinedistribution**.

Get a Vaccine Appointment
Ask your clinic or hospital if they can vaccinate you. You can also search for a vaccination site near you and make an appointment at **vaccinefinder.nyc.gov**. If you need assistance making an appointment at a City-run site, call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692). Vaccine supplies are limited, so check regularly as new appointments will be added as more vaccine becomes available.

On the Day of Your Appointment
Reschedule your appointment if you are not feeling well that day. Wear a face covering when traveling to and from your vaccination site and while at your appointment – you will not be allowed in without one.

You need to bring proof that you live in NYS or NYC (depending on the site) and are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. If you are eligible because you have HIV and are being vaccinated by your health care provider, your medical records at your provider's office can serve as proof of eligibility. Otherwise, when scheduling your appointment, you will need to complete a certification confirming you have an underlying health condition that makes you eligible for vaccination. You do not need to state which health condition or provide any other evidence to demonstrate which condition you have. For more information on proof of eligibility, visit **nyc.gov/covidvaccine**.

Continue COVID-19 Prevention Measures After Vaccination
Getting vaccinated protects you from COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization and death. But we still need to be cautious until more people are vaccinated and we understand how well the vaccines protect people around us who have not been vaccinated. Even after vaccination, continue to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay home if you are sick or recently tested positive for COVID-19.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- Wear a face covering.
- Wash your hands often.

COVID-19 Vaccines are Safe
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has authorized several COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use. These vaccines have gone through large clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people of various ages, races and ethnicities. The trials showed that the vaccines are safe to use and that serious side effects are very rare. Common side effects include mild to moderate soreness or swelling on the arm where you get the vaccine, headache, body aches, tiredness and fever. The vaccines do not cause COVID-19 infection.

The U.S. government and research organizations continue to monitor the vaccines.

COVID-19 Vaccines are Effective
All authorized COVID-19 vaccines are very effective at protecting people from severe illness, hospitalization and death.

People with Low CD4 Counts or Not Taking HIV Treatment Should Get a Vaccine
People who have an immune system weakened by HIV or another condition were not part of the COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials, so we do not have data on how safe or effective the vaccine would be for them. If you have a low CD4 count or weak immune system, you can receive the vaccine. You may particularly benefit from getting vaccinated as you could get very sick if you get COVID-19. However, the vaccine may not work as well at protecting you from getting COVID-19. Talk to your provider if you have questions.

Get Regular HIV Care
HIV can make you sick if you do not get care and treatment. Take your HIV medicines as prescribed. Tell your provider about anything that makes it difficult for you to take your medicines or stay in care. You can stay in touch through phone, text or video chat. If you have trouble getting your medicines, call the NYS Uninsured Care Programs at 800-542-2437. To find an HIV care provider, visit the NYC Health Map or text "CARE" to 877-877.

For more information on HIV and COVID-19, see guidance from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, visit **nyc.gov/covidvaccine**. For information on COVID-19, visit **nyc.gov/health/coronavirus**.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.   3.24.21