Whitney Young Health COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Begins with Frontline Personnel

In late December 2020, healthcare and medical facilities across the country, including Whitney Young Health, began to receive their first shipments of the long-awaited COVID-19 vaccine.

The vaccine, which requires two doses administered several weeks apart in order to offer full protection against the virus, is the first momentous step toward bringing the pandemic under control.

These initial doses received by Whitney Young Health were allocated for employees, starting with frontline personnel such as doctors, nurses, counselors and other employees who interact with patients face-to-face, followed by those staff whose contact with patients may be more limited.

Among the first to be vaccinated were WYH Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Deborah Vasquez and Assistant Vice President of Dental, Dr. Gordon Holder, DDS, demonstrating to staff the ease and safety of the injection.

In addition to Whitney Young Health staff, doses of the vaccine were administered to WYH's frontline community partners, such as school nurses in the Albany and Watervliet school districts who work in conjunction with our School Based Health Centers in those school systems.

Although the very first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine went to healthcare workers and nursing home staff and residents, the next weeks and months will see New York State
open up vaccine availability to more groups of people, including those 65 years old and over, and individuals with medical conditions that put them at higher risk for complications if they were to become ill with the coronavirus.

To learn more about when you and your family members will be eligible to receive the vaccine, see the article below.

A Shot in the Arm

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Deborah Vasquez (left) and Assistant Vice President of Dental Gordon Holder, DDS (right) were among the first WYH providers to receive their initial dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at our Albany Health Center.

When and Where Will I Be Able to Get My COVID Vaccine?

*We understand that many people may be eager to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.*

At Whitney Young Health we are planning for the distribution of vaccines, have been approved by the NYS Department of Health to administer the vaccine, and are awaiting our supply.

When we do receive our shipment the supply may be limited, and will be available to patients following the guidelines determined by New York State. Currently vaccines are only available to people in the Priority 1A and 1B groups. To view who is eligible in these groups, click here: [https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/phased-distribution-vaccine#phase-1a](https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/phased-distribution-vaccine#phase-1a).

Please do not call Whitney Young Health to make an appointment for a vaccine at this time. We will share information on our website ([www.wmyhealth.org](http://www.wmyhealth.org)) as updated information becomes available.

You can schedule an appointment at any vaccine clinic in New York. To check your eligibility to receive the vaccine, please visit this website: [https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/](https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/). This site will ask questions to determine your eligibility and list locations where you can make an appointment. If you are part of the Priority 1A or 1B groups you can also call 1-833-NYS-4-VAX (1-833-697-4829) to schedule your vaccination.
Vaccine information, from eligibility for to locations of sites administering the shot, are constantly changing.

To keep up-to-date, learn more about the vaccine, and get tips on staying healthy and safe, click the blue COVID-19 box on the right.

**Around Whitney Young Health**

**AOW Associates "Adopts" Two Families**

Each holiday season, **AOW Associates, Inc.** a commercial construction company located in Albany, "adopts" a family served by WYH. In December 2020, they doubled their generosity by adopting two families.

Families are selected by WYH employees who have worked with them and determined their needs. A wish list is compiled by the family members, requesting items not just for the kids, but for everyone. This year’s requests ranged from toys and games, to kitchen utensils, to bicycles and bunk beds.

On Tuesday, December 22, gifts for one of the families - two parents and three children - were delivered to their apartment in Albany where the wrapped and labeled packages took up a corner of the living room.

The other adopted family was equally delighted with their gifts, but did not wish to have any photos taken.

*Above:* Francisco, Amelia and their son, Johnny smile as their items are delivered by Whitney Young Health maintenance staff.

*Right:* Johnny, hugs one of the presents delivered for his family of five.

Preventing COVID-19 is only one part of staying healthy.
Throughout the past year, the pandemic led many of our patients to put off getting the care they need. When patients cancelled their appointments, they missed out on:

- *Routine care and regular monitoring to keep chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes and hypertension under control.*

- *Keeping babies and children up-to-date on immunizations that decrease the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases and make sure that they remain eligible to enroll in school.*

- *Dental check-ups and cleanings help to prevent cavities, gum disease, and keep teeth healthy and strong.*

Your donation can help cover the cost of care for patients as they return to our health centers for check-ups, dental work, and visits for issues that may have gone neglected.

[Click to DONATE]

**COVID-19 Updates**

Click the button to the right for the latest information on COVID-19 testing, vaccine availability, and any changes to our programs, services and procedures.