COVID-19 vaccine: Top 10 things you need to know

From Dr. Robert Citronberg, Executive Medical Director of Infectious Disease and Prevention

1. Vaccinating as many people as possible is the only way to end this pandemic. Without a vaccine, the pandemic could go on for two to three more years or longer.

2. We expect everyone who wants a vaccine will be able to get one in the next few months as large quantities become available.

3. We encourage our patients and communities to get the first vaccine available to them and not wait.

4. The benefit of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine far outweighs the risk.

5. Trials showed the Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines were extremely effective. There were no serious safety concerns reported in the trials.

6. Many people who receive the vaccine report side effects including pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, nausea and fever. These side effects often indicate a person’s immune system is responding properly to the vaccine.

7. The Pfizer vaccine is administered in two doses given no less than 21 days apart. The Moderna vaccine is administered in two doses given no less than 28 days apart. It’s important to get both doses to ensure full protection. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is administered in one dose.

8. Even after receiving the vaccine, everyone needs to wear masks and practice social distancing in public spaces. Hand washing is also important. It’ll take time to immunize enough of the population to stop the virus from spreading, so we’ll need to continue these safe practices for some time.

9. Our top priority is to administer the vaccine safely and equitably.

10. Our Safe Care Promise provides additional measures at all of our locations to protect you and our team members. In person or online, we’re here for you.