

Avery Wood and John Hearst MD on 03/05/2021 12:50 AM UTC

Hello all,

I am quickly putting out this note because there are several new developments in vaccine distribution that I want you to be aware of.

Currently the following people are eligible:

- All health care workers who live or work in Vermont
- All those 65 and over.

Next Monday, March 8th, many new folks will be eligible for vaccination:

- K-12 public school employees, child care workers and public safety employees who are not already eligible.
- All those over 55 with a high risk condition. (See below for more details.)

Unfortunately, the state has decided that only those people who live or work in Vermont are eligible. They will no longer vaccinate based on where your primary care doctor is located. Those of our folks who live in New York or Massachusetts will have to negotiate those state's systems. We were blindsided by this decision and I am not at all happy about it!

Where to schedule in for a vaccine:

Healthcare workers go to <https://svhealthcare.org/>

Others go to <https://vermont.force.com/events/s/selfregistration> to or call 855-722-7878 to schedule in with the health department

or

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine> to schedule in with a pharmacy.

There are clinics planned at certain schools for school employees and possibly other locations but I do not have those details now.

What are the qualifying high risk conditions?

- o Current cancer - This includes leukemia and multiple myeloma. If you are being treated for active cancer or receiving cancer treatment to keep your cancer in remission then you are who they are looking for.
- o Chronic kidney disease - If I have sent you to see a nephrologist due to low kidney function, if you have recovered from kidney failure or if we have read you the riot act about not using ibuprofen for fear of further damaging your kidneys then this is probably you. Ask if you are not sure.
- o COPD, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis - asthma does not count but BOOP and bronchiolitis obliterans do.
- o Heart disease, including a history of a heart attack, heart failure, coronary artery disease of any cause, cardiomyopathies, pulmonary hypertension. Regular old high blood pressure does not count.
- o Immunocompromised state (a seriously weakened immune system) due to solid organ transplant, blood, or bone marrow transplant, a diagnosed immune deficiency, HIV with a low CD4 cell count or HIV that is not being treated, prolonged use of corticosteroids like prednisone, use of other immune suppressing drugs like those used for treatment of autoimmune diseases such as Crohn's disease and rheumatoid arthritis.

- o Severe obesity (those with a BMI of 40 or above)

You can figure out your BMI by putting in your weight and height here:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult_bmi/english_bmi_calculator/bmi_calculator.html

- o Pregnancy

- o Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes

o Disabilities including chromosomal disorders, such as Down syndrome, intellectual disabilities (those with an IQ below 70,) and disabilities that get in the way of lung function like muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, high level spina cord injuries, ALS.

- o Sickle cell disease.

On May 15th, registration opens up to those over 16 with high risk conditions.

You do not need proof of having a high risk condition to sign up for a vaccine, however, you will need to give your doctor's name and they will be doing some random checking to be sure folks are being truthful. If you are unsure if you qualify then please ask.

If you have made it all the way to the end of this email then I will tell you that I heard a rumor that registration may open tomorrow. If you are eager, you might want to check it out and see.

I can tell you that all of us here are enjoying being vaccinated. It has taken much of the pandemic induced anxiety out of our day to day lives. We encourage all of you to get vaccinated as soon as it is available.

- Avery Wood and all of us at Wood and Hearst MD

PS: We do not have a preferred vaccine to recommend.