

Immunization Against COVID-19 Is Crucial

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The Alliance for Patient Access, founded in 2006, is a national network of physicians dedicated to ensuring patient access to approved therapies and appropriate clinical care. AfPA accomplishes this mission by recruiting, training and mobilizing policy-minded physicians to be effective advocates for patient access. AfPA is organized as a non-profit 501(c)(4) corporation and headed by an independent board of directors. Its physician leadership is supported by policy advocacy management and public affairs consultants.

In 2012, AfPA established the Institute for Patient Access, a related 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. The Institute for Patient Access is a physician-led policy research organization dedicated to maintaining the primacy of the physician-patient relationship in the provision of quality health care. In furtherance of its mission, IfPA produces educational materials and programming designed to promote informed discussion about patient access to approved therapies and appropriate clinical care.

Visit allianceforpatientaccess.org and instituteforpatientaccess.org to learn more about each organization.



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communities healthier and safer for those at most significant risk. The loss of human lives would have been many times that which has already been experienced. (1-4)

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With an extended indication, COVID-19 immunization is now available for children, adolescents, and adults. Data suggest that these preparations are safe in pregnancy and may decrease the disease burden in these individuals. Several types of immunizations are available. Although mRNA products are thought to be new and untested, this technology was developed in the 1990s, almost thirty years ago. These products instruct messenger RNA within human cells to make COVID-like proteins that trigger the immune system and produce a response capable of fighting the virus. Protein subunit vaccines are referred to as “traditional” since they have been used to produce immune responses against influenza, pertussis, and hepatitis B. A modified, harmless version of the virus proteins is delivered to the cell, and the cell creates a novel response to the foreign protein. Finally, vector vaccines have been used for decades to fight diseases such as chickenpox, malaria, and tuberculosis. These use modified viruses, not necessarily of the same type, to train the body to fight infection. Viruses causing the common cold can be modified to fight COVID. COVID vaccines are recommended for everyone ages six months and older, and boosters for everyone ages five years and older, if eligible. (5)

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Importantly, and despite insistence by some to the contrary, COVID immunization is a safe and sound process. COVID vaccines have been thoroughly tested through multi-phase randomized trials with tens of thousands of participants. These products have proven safe and effective for adults and children. (6) US FDA,

EMA, and WHO have vetted and approved the use of these products for the general population at risk. (7-9)

These immunizations are readily available in doctor's offices, neighborhood pharmacies, and community health centers. Other venues may offer immunizations as well. Although there are increasingly more options for immunization, a healthcare provider or pharmacist can help decide which product is best for the individual seeking protection.

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Disclosure: Mitchell Goldstein, MD, MBA, CML is a physician member of AfPA

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