



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 10, 2020**

Current COVID-19 case count

Scott County – Total of 12,636
Total deaths in Scott County: 113
9 since last briefing on Tuesday

Rock Island County – 124 new cases since Wednesday; total of 9,522
Currently in hospital in Rock Island County: 76
Total deaths in Rock Island County: 192
5 newly reported deaths: a man in his 90s, a man in his 80s, a woman in her 90s, and a woman in her 80s, all of whom had been living in long-term care facilities; and a woman in her 80s who died at home.

Today's call

A video recording of today's media briefing can be found at
<https://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

Vaccine 101: What we know now

The first questions were answered by Edward Rivers, director of the Scott County Health Department

It seems like the process for approving the vaccine moved really quickly. Did it?

- Traditionally, it has taken many years to develop a vaccine, confirm its safety and efficacy, and manufacture the vaccine in sufficient quantities for public use. This timeline was shortened for the COVID-19 vaccines in development. Many of the steps taken in any clinical trial were allowed to take place at the same time instead of one after another. Also, due to the pandemic the United States government and others have heavily invested in building the manufacturing capacity to produce large numbers of vaccine doses before the findings of the phase 3 trials were available. This ensures that vaccine is available once the authorization is given. None of the ways in which this vaccine development and production was sped up mean that short cuts were taken or safety was compromised.

What will the COVID-19 vaccine protect me from and for how long?

- Both Pfizer and Moderna's vaccine trials have shown about a 95 percent success in protecting people from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Experts do not know what percentage of

people would need to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is a term used to describe when enough people have protection—either from previous infection or vaccination—that it is unlikely a virus or bacteria can spread and cause disease. As a result, everyone within the community is protected even if some people don't have any protection themselves. The percentage of people who need to have protection in order to achieve herd immunity varies by disease.

When will the first vaccines begin to arrive in the community and how many doses will be available?

- The Illinois Department of Public Health has told local health departments to expect the first shipments to arrive in Rock Island County sometime next week. The Rock Island County Health Department is expecting 1,000 doses that will be split evenly between UnityPoint-Trinity and Genesis health systems. From there, the hospital systems will triage doses to their healthcare team. Subsequent shipments also will go to the hospital systems.
- After the hospital systems have vaccinated their team members, doses then will go to other medical first-responders, including paramedics.
- The Iowa Department of Public Health also anticipates some vaccine will arrive in local areas next week. Scott County is expecting about 2,000 doses that will primarily be going to Genesis and UnityPoint-Trinity. We are awaiting final guidance from the state of Iowa and may adjust allocations next week to include emergency medical service providers

How will the community deal with the ultra-cold storage of the Pfizer vaccine?

- The Pfizer vaccine is required to be shipped at up to 100 degrees below zero. However, it is stable for five days outside of that ultra-cold temperature. The Moderna vaccine does not need the ultra-cold storage.
- The State of Iowa is only shipping the Pfizer vaccine to facilities and providers that have ultra-cold storage. Certain facilities in Scott County are able to store vaccine in this type of storage.
- The five-day clock starts ticking when the doses start to be transported to Rock Island County.

How many doses of the vaccine will I need?

- Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, which are expected to arrive in our community in the next two weeks, require two doses.
- Individuals will receive the second dose of the vaccines after at least a 21 day wait for the Pfizer vaccine and after at least a 28 day wait for the Moderna vaccine.

Do both doses of the vaccine have to come from the same vaccine?

- Yes, both doses must be of the same vaccine. The vaccines cannot be interchanged. As individuals are given their first dose of vaccine, the vaccine manufacturer and other information is recorded in the state's immunization registry for future use.

Will I be able to choose which of the COVID-19 vaccines I want?

- When limited supply of vaccine first makes its way to our community and is provided to priority groups such as health care workers, individuals in the priority groups will be provided the vaccine that is available at the time based on supply and distribution factors.
- When enough vaccine is available in our community for everyone who would like to receive it, it is likely that individuals will have greater choice in which vaccine they receive and where they receive it.

How do we know if the COVID-19 vaccine is safe?

- Vaccine safety is a priority – new vaccines undergo serious reviews in a lab and through trials. Early results from trials show the COVID-19 vaccine has worked as it is supposed to with no serious side effects. These results include the more than 2-3 months of follow-up of individuals involved in the vaccine trials.
- There is solid medical and scientific evidence that tell us the benefits of approved vaccines far outweigh the risks. This is also true for the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The FDA advises manufacturers that at least 3,000 participants are required to assess safety. The current Phase 3 of trials have included 30,000-50,000 participants.
- Vaccine approval normally includes four phases. Once the vaccine is approved after Phase 3, Phase 4 will continue and will include continued monitoring and gathering of safety data.

What reaction should I expect after getting the vaccine?

- The vaccine does not cause someone to get sick with COVID-19. Vaccines teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as a sore arm, headache, chills or fever. These symptoms are normal and are signs the body is building immunity.
- You can expect side effects to go away without complication or injury within about a day or two. Remember, these are signs that your immune system is responding to the vaccine and building immunity.

The next set of questions were answered by Janet Hill, chief operating officer, Rock Island County Health Department

I already had COVID-19, should I still get the vaccine?

- Not enough is known about how long natural immunity lasts for those that have recovered from the virus. The CDC is still learning more about natural immunity to COVID-19. The CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will make recommendations to CDC on who should get a COVID-19 vaccine.
- The vaccine can increase your protection from the virus.

I'm healthy. Why do I need to be vaccinated?

- While you may be healthy, many individuals in our community have risk factors for getting serious complications from COVID-19 infection. Getting a COVID-19 vaccination protects you so you may protect others around you as well.

I'm nervous about getting the vaccine. What should I do?

- It's normal to be nervous about something new and to have questions. We encourage you to ask questions and get answers to your questions from reliable sources. We recommend looking for information from the CDC, the FDA (Food and Drug Administration), both state health departments, and our local health departments.
- As it gets closer to the time when the vaccine may be available for you, your healthcare provider will also be a great resource to talk with about the COVID-19 vaccine.

How will I know it's my turn to get the vaccine?

- We have a team in place working hard to communicate this important information to our community. You can expect to get information from our departments, through avenues such as social media, our website, our local media partners, and also local healthcare providers.
- There is no "list" that any first responder, healthcare worker or member of the public needs to get on at this point.
- The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination program can be compared with the rollout of new software for phones – we expect some challenges, and we'll work quickly to meet them.

Where will I get the vaccine when it's my turn?

- The first priority groups to get the COVID-19 vaccines will likely get the vaccine through their employer or at a community-based site. As more vaccine makes its way into our community, we expect to continue using community-based sites. Once the vaccine is available to all who would like it, individual healthcare providers will likely have a role in

also giving the vaccine. These plans are changing as we learn more about the vaccine supply and federal and state recommendations.

Once I receive the vaccine, will I still need to wear a mask and social distance?

- We will still need to wear masks and practice physical distancing until a large proportion of the population is vaccinated and we are sure the vaccine provides long-term protection. Initially, we will not have enough vaccine to vaccinate everyone who wants the vaccine and the virus still will be transmitted.

Will I have to pay for the vaccine?

- The federal government is committed to providing free or low-cost COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccine doses purchased with taxpayer dollars will be given at no cost. There may be an administration cost that is covered by insurance or other sources for individuals without insurance. Cost will not be a barrier.

What can you tell us about the new method of vaccine being used, called mRNA vaccines?

- They cannot give someone COVID-19.
- mRNA vaccines do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19.
- They do not affect or interact with our DNA in any way.
- mRNA stimulates the body's cells to produce a protein that looks like the COVID virus to our immune system. This kickstarts the product of antibodies that fight the actual virus.
- mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept.
- The cell breaks down and gets rid of the mRNA soon after it does its job.

For Illinois, how do we know that downstate is getting its "fair share?"

- The City of Chicago is getting separate shipments of vaccines from the federal government.
- The rest of Illinois will receive shipments through the Illinois Department of Public Health, which determined that 50 counties in the state will get doses first because of their case counts. Rock Island County is among those first 50 counties.

When will children be given the vaccine?

- The Moderna vaccine has included children in its clinical trials. We expect more information about results when the Moderna vaccine receives emergency use authorization from the FDA. This could be as early as next week.

- If a pediatric vaccine is approved, children will be prioritized along with all of other groups. Some may fit in with other groups, including those with chronic disease, essential workers, etc.

Sources for these answers

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/vaccines/vaccines-faq>

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/resources/general-resources/frequently-asked-questions+covid-19-vaccine>

More information

- <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/restore-illinois-mitigation-plan>
- https://governor.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Summary%20of%20Enhanced%20Public%20Health%20Measures_final.pdf
- <https://www.scottcountyiowa.gov/health/post/do-masks-prevent-covid-19>
- <https://togetherqc.com/2020/10/mask-mandate-local-initiative/>
- www.TogetherQC.com
- coronavirus.iowa.gov
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=2>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Rock%20Island>
- <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/Covid19Response.aspx>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/long-term-care-facility-outbreaks-covid-19>

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