



Dear Patients, Families, and Colleagues:

I am writing to you with welcome news.

Since the FDA emergency use approval and first shipments of COVID-19 vaccine in early December, Vanderbilt Health has administered the initial vaccine dose to well over 15,000 people working at the medical center. We are encouraged by this progress, and hope that we will soon begin to experience reduced numbers of Vanderbilt Health personnel unable to work due to COVID-19 community spread.

Based on this progress, and on direction from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH), I am pleased to announce that we are able to begin vaccinating patients, starting with those age 75 and over. We have developed plans and procedures that will allow us to begin registering and vaccinating over 1,000 Vanderbilt Health patients every day, starting with this age group.

We'll reach out to you when it's your turn to get the vaccine.

We are now beginning to contact our patients age 75 and over through the My Health at Vanderbilt (MHAV) on-line patient portal. The most current information on patient groups eligible for vaccination through Vanderbilt Health, and details about the TDOH COVID Vaccine Plan can be found on [VUMC's website](#).

If you are an established Vanderbilt Health patient, we'll send you a message through your MHAV account to let you know it's time for you to schedule your vaccine. If you are an established patient but don't have an active MHAV account, [start yours now at this link](#). MHAV is the best way to manage and schedule your healthcare services through Vanderbilt Health, and it's also the way we will contact you and register you for the vaccine. Importantly, over the coming weeks as additional allotments of vaccine become available to Tennessee, the TDOH will expand the eligibility criteria beyond age 75 and over. We will contact additional Vanderbilt Health patients as they become eligible through MHAV to schedule vaccination.

In the meantime if you already have an active MHAV account, please log in to make sure you remember your password and have access. Please also check your communication preferences in MHAV to make sure you have elected to get email notices from us.

The most important thing to remember is that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective.

In my message over the holidays, "[**A Holiday Gift**](#)," I described the many benefits to getting vaccinated – including the remarkable impact on people who cannot be safeguarded by taking the vaccine themselves, either because it isn't yet available to them, or because their immune systems won't respond even if they do take it. Given the supplies of vaccine available, vaccinating the thousands of patients in our care will take months. I encourage you to schedule your vaccine as soon as we contact you – we are eager to vaccinate as many of our patients as possible not only to protect you, but also to gradually reduce the risk to those who are not yet vaccinated, or unable to be immunized. To answer your questions about COVID-19 vaccination, and those of your family and friends, [**at this website**](#) you will find more than 100 questions answered by our experts, as well as a growing library of videos and other valuable information.

We are grateful that you choose to receive your care from Vanderbilt Health. Together, we can control this pandemic and protect one another.

Sincerely,



Jeff Balser, MD, PhD
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