\*\*\* Last minute update \*\*\* As of Wednesday, 1/13/21, California has changed their priority system to allow everyone ages 65 and above to get the vaccine. However, they haven't said how they will be able to get it. Next week, they will roll out a system to allow you to sign up for a text or email notification for when you can get the vaccine, so stay tuned. We we send out another email as soon as we have more information.

We have been inundated with calls about the COVID vaccines, and even though the vaccines are not yet available for the general public, we do have some additional information that is helpful to know. Please note that as soon as we get more information, we will send out another email. Calling our office will not get you any additional information.

WHEN CAN I GET VACCINATED?

Currently, California is only vaccinating healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities, and there are approximately 3 million people in this category to vaccinate. California has developed a priority plan, and these individuals are in Phase 1A. The next phase (Phase 1B) consists of 2 tiers, the first includes people 75 and over as well as workers in industries such as education, childcare, food, agriculture, and emergency services. The second tier of Phase 1B includes people ages 65-74, people living in congregant settings, as well as people who may be exposed at work in certain other occupations. Please note that this tier is strictly based on age or occupation, and it does not matter if you have medical co-morbidities. AT THIS TIME, IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT INDIVIDUALS IN PHASE 1B WILL BEGIN VACCINATION AT THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY. The next phase (Phase 1C) includes all individuals ages 50-64, individuals who have certain underlying conditions and are ages 16-49, as well as individuals who may be exposed at work in certain other occupations. AT THIS TIME, IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT INDIVIDUALS IN PHASE 1C WILL BEGIN VACCINATION AT THE BEGINNING OF MARCH. Everyone else (less than 50 years of age) will be in Phase 2, and we are anticipating that vaccines for them will begin in April. At this point, I do not believe that any one vaccine is better than another – you should get whichever one is available. For details about California’s tiered system, as well as more information about the vaccine, please visit the following site: <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/>.

WHERE WILL I GET VACCINATED?

We will not be administering the COVID vaccine from our office anytime in the near future. Given the huge numbers of people that need to be vaccinated, the state is currently working with large institutions first to enable mass vaccinations. Many of you may have heard that Petco Park is being converted to a vaccination supercenter, currently only for healthcare workers but soon for everyone else as well. Scripps is currently vaccinating only healthcare workers, but will likely vaccinate the general public once we move into Phase 1B as well. The county is also working on other vaccination sites as well, including pharmacies. However, none of the details of these have been worked out yet. You will likely need to bring your driver’s license or other photo ID for proof of age, and you will probably need to bring some form of proof of employment if you qualify based upon your occupation (see the tiers in the link above). It is possible that you may need a medical note from me if you fall into the Phase 1C category, but, once again, none of these details have been worked out yet. I suspect registering to get vaccinated will be similar to the method currently in use in Phase 1A now, where you will be schedule an appointment online for your vaccine. The link from the San Diego County website listed below will likely be one of the ways to register for an appointment. This link currently is only accepting appointments for healthcare workers, but once they open up to the next tiers, I believe you will be able to make the appointments at this website, so bookmark this site and check back frequently: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/community_epidemiology/dc/2019-nCoV/vaccines/COVID-19-VaxEvents.html>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

* If you are a healthcare worker and are either currently working or retired but are interested in helping with vaccinating others, the county needs your help. We are attempting to vaccinate a huge number of individuals, so anyone that is interested in help vaccinating, please click here: [https://healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov](https://healthcarevolunteers.ca.gov/).
* I highly encourage that everybody download the CA NOTIFY app on their Apple or Android phones. It works best the more people have it installed. It uses the Bluetooth function of your phone but does not store or transmit any personally identifiable information. If someone has the app and tests positive for COVID, they would enter the fact that they were diagnosed into the app, and then anyone who was within 6 feet of them for at least 15 minutes in the last two weeks will get a notification to go and get tested. Certainly if you never leave your house, you may not benefit from this app, but for people that do go out, this helps facilitate notification if anyone physically close to them tests positive for COVID. If you want to read more about it, please check out <http://canotify.ca.gov/>.
* Many people have been asking about MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY treatment once they are diagnosed with COVID. Although I am not aware of sites where you can go to get the treatment right now, there are ongoing research studies. If you are interested in participating in a research study and were just recently diagnosed COVID-19 positive within the last six days, please click here: <https://www.riseabovecovid.org/en>. Otherwise, there is also a national website of infusion centers that supposedly offer the treatment. However, the site does not appear to be very operational now, but I suspect they will continue to update it in the future: [https://covid.infusioncenter.org](https://covid.infusioncenter.org/).

In the meantime, sit tight, and I will relay more information as soon as it becomes available, which will probably be within the next couple of weeks. I understand the frustration with wait and with the unknown, but the world has never had to deal with a medical emergency like this before, and we are all still figuring out the best way to get things accomplished!

Wynnshang Sun, MD