



December 17, 2020

Dear Northfield Retirement Community members and family,

By now, you're probably aware that distribution of one COVID-19 vaccine has begun and that approval of a second vaccine is expected in the very near future. This is exciting news!

Some of you may be concerned about the safety of these new vaccines, as they have been developed far more quickly than we're used to seeing. It's important to know that critical safety steps were not skipped to speed up the process. The new vaccines have been tested in tens of thousands of people, including older adults, and have undergone the same rigorous testing for safety and efficacy as other vaccines.

The two new COVID-19 vaccines require two separate doses, given about a month apart. Some participants in clinical trials have reported experiencing short-term side effects after being vaccinated, such as headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever and pain at the injection site. Side effects like these are expected with vaccines, and are a sign that your immune system is working.

As with any medication, serious side effects, such as severe allergic reactions, can occur. Based on the experience of the test participants, these events are expected to be very rare. Just as with all vaccines, ongoing, nationwide monitoring for serious side effects is in place for the new vaccines.

One thing I can absolutely assure you of is this: because of the way they are designed, the new COVID-19 vaccines cannot give you a COVID-19 infection.

The Northfield Retirement Community is participating in a program with the Centers for Disease Control and Minnesota Department of Health to efficiently distribute these vaccines to residents free of charge once they are available. We will keep you informed of this process as we move forward.

I encourage you to reach out to us if you have any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, its possible side effects and what to expect after you or a loved one receives it. You may also wish to reach out to your own medical provider should you have existing health conditions that you want to discuss in relation to the vaccine. Please know that the safety and well-being of our staff and residents remain our top priority.

I am confident that the unprecedented scientific achievement of these COVID-19 vaccines will eventually enable us to enjoy life with our loved ones again. I look forward to doing my part in this effort by getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and I hope you will join me.

Sincerely,

Steven Lawler, MD  
*Medical Director  
Northfield Care Center*