

# HOMETOWN HEALTH

A publication from your healthcare professionals at BURNETT MEDICAL CENTER



## A Message FROM OUR CEO

I served more than twenty years on active duty with the United States Army Medical Department. One motto made the distinction between being ready and being prepared. We would often say never ready, always be prepared.

The previous eighteen months has reinforced the need to always be prepared. But how can one be completely prepared for the unknown and the challenging times in our country and our world.

Unprecedented times. Unprecedented challenges. The need to accept the reality of ambiguity combined with mission complexity.

With that in mind, through it all, please know that Burnett Medical Center has embraced and relied upon our mission of providing compassionate, quality care close to home.

Many positive actions have occurred. To name a few:

- We were aided by the Payroll Protection Program offered by the Small Business Administration. This program allowed us to keep our workforce fully employed and intact, during some of the darkest and most challenging times early into the global pandemic, where

we were required to navigate through uncertain times.

- We applied our training in Emergency Preparedness like never before, to ensure we brought to bear our Incident Command System. We deployed personal protective equipment for our frontline workforce to ensure that we delivered safe, required care.
- We persevered through supply chain issues to have the needed resources available, in the right quantities, in the right place, at the right time.
- We invested significant capital costs to install more negative pressure rooms. This was done to prepare for the anticipated greater capacity of hospitalized COVID patients.
- We have made significant upgrades to our rooftop air handler units resulting in 100% ongoing ionization in our air circulation system, which disinfects the internal air throughout our facility.

While the list can go on, as important as infrastructure investments have been of great help, most importantly, it is our people that make the qualitative difference in the provision of compassionate care enjoyed by those that choose Burnett Medical



*Gordy Lewis, CEO*

Center and the Continuing Care Center for their current and on-going care. 24/7/365.

In closing, please be assured that we stand ready to serve you through your brightest days and your darkest hours.

We take that heartfelt duty seriously. Allow me to express our gratitude and appreciation for you standing by and for us. We are better and stronger when we stand together.

While there will be new challenges ahead, and challenges for which we may not be ready, know that—like today— we will be prepared to provide the best care to the best patients and residents: You.



## SUMMER 2021 | Volume 18 | NUMBER 9

Page 2 .....	COVID OVERVIEW
Page 3 .....	COVID VACCINE FAQ'S
Page 5 .....	COVID VACCINE AT BMC
Page 6 .....	COVID PREVENTION EFFORTS
Page 7 .....	MEMORIAL GARDEN

# COVID-19 Overview

## What is COVID-19?

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus that is newly discovered in humans. It generally attacks the lungs and can produce an immune response throughout the body. It is very contagious and has quickly spread around the world. COVID-19 most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, a flu, or pneumonia, but COVID-19 can also harm other parts of the body.

- Most people who catch COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some people become severely ill.
- Older adults and people who have certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- Hundreds of thousands of people have died from COVID-19 in the United States.
- Vaccines against COVID-19 are generally safe and effective.

## Who is at risk?

- All people are at risk of contracting; however, some are at higher risk of serious illness. People at higher risk for severe COVID-19 include:
  - Older adults
  - Women who are pregnant
  - People with certain medical conditions (i.e., heart, breathing such as asthma, diabetes)

## How to protect myself and others?

If you meet one of these criteria listed above, it is important to consider getting a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can. The vaccines are not mandatory, meaning you don't have to get it, but it can protect against COVID-19 and from spreading to your loved ones.

The vaccines are free and available to everyone age 12 and older in the United States,

regardless of your immigration status and whether you have health insurance.

## What vaccines are available?

- Pfizer Vaccine- for ages 12 and older; two shots given 21 days apart.
- Moderna Vaccine – for ages 16 and older; two shots given 28 days apart.
- Johnson and Johnson Vaccines – for ages 18 and older, 1 shot

If you have underlying health conditions you can get the vaccine. Talk to your provider.

BMC provides the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine through the clinic. See page 4 for details about the vaccination process and how to schedule your appointment by calling 715-463-5353.

## What are the benefits of getting vaccinated?

- COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting severely sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19.
- Getting vaccinated can help protect people around you.
- COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.
- None of the COVID-19 vaccines will cause you to become sick with COVID-19 or test positive on a viral test (PCR or antigen).
- COVID-19 vaccination is an important tool to help stop the pandemic.
- COVID-19 vaccines offer protection against variants of SARS-CoV-2 and can help prevent future, possibly more dangerous, variants from developing.
- Vaccination is a safer way to help build protection than getting COVID-19.

Source: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/>

# COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ's

The best treatment for any illness, whether it is a bacterial or viral infection, is prevention and vaccines are a common prevention method. Vaccines have been around for over 200 years and have mostly eradicated several deadly diseases.

COVID-19 vaccines are no different and in most cases are successfully preventing future infections. "Administering COVID-19 vaccines started roughly eight months ago and since then we have continued to see a minimal amount of hospitalizations of people who've received the vaccine" says Eric Stomberg, Doctor of Pharmacy and Director of the Inpatient Pharmacy at Burnett Medical Center. There are many misconceptions about the COVID-19 vaccine. Here are some frequently asked questions.

## Do COVID-19 vaccines alter DNA?

No. The initial COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna are called "mRNA" vaccines. Eric says, "there is a possibility this type of vaccine will replace all other vaccines." This is not new technology for the COVID-19 vaccine. The first mRNA vaccines were tested in the early 2000s for the SARS, influenza, Zika, and rabies viruses. These types of vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.

The mRNA vaccines deliver instructions (genetic material) to our cells to start building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. However, the material never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where DNA is kept. This means the genetic material in the vaccines cannot affect or interact with our DNA. All COVID-19 vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease. If you want to learn more, please visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

## Are COVID-19 Vaccines FDA approved?

Not at this time. Once the COVID-19 virus emerged, vaccines were produced, tested, and went into full production for vaccinations. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) requires all medications to go through specific stages to determine safety and effectiveness. There are misconceptions about the vaccine being rushed or not safe because it was developed too fast. The process was accelerated but no research or important testing was skipped. After the COVID-19 vaccine went through the appropriate phases of clinical trials, most

drug applications typically sit with the FDA for years behind other new drug applications. However, the COVID-19 vaccine went to the front of the line due to the urgent need. There were no corners cut regarding safety, and after eight months of vaccinations, it is still proving to be safe and effective. All marketed vaccines have passed the three clinical trials required by all medications to be administered to patients. The current status of the vaccine is called Emergency Use Authorization. This means it has not been with the FDA long enough to receive the full FDA stamp of approval. The vaccines will likely get full approval soon.

## How safe is this vaccine and what are the long-term effects?

With any medical procedure or medication, there are potential risks involved. Most people experience only minimal side effects such as a sore shoulder and overall feeling of being worn down. These reactions generally last about 24 hours.

Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are unlikely following any vaccination, including COVID-19 vaccination. Vaccine monitoring has historically shown that side effects generally happen within six weeks of receiving a vaccine dose. For this reason, the FDA required each of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines to be studied for at least two months (eight weeks) after the final dose. Millions of people have received COVID-19 vaccines, and few known long-term side effects have been detected to date.

BMC has administered over 2,200 doses so almost 1,100 people have been fully vaccinated. Eric states, "It feels good knowing so many people are safer now. We are not completely out of the woods yet, but we are closer. Not everyone can be in a lifesaving situation, but know that if you do choose to vaccinate, you have the potential to save someone's life."

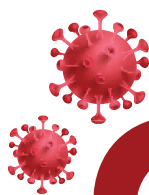
If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, it is highly encouraged to call your healthcare provider or local pharmacy to discuss options about getting vaccinated, and what exemptions may apply to you, such as certain medical or religious and philosophical needs.

# 100% COMMITTED

On August 2nd, BMC's Rural Health Clinic had an unannounced surveyor present from the Division of Quality Assurance for a Rural Health Clinic recertification state survey. The survey included observations of patient encounters, interviews with patients and staff, policy/procedure review, review of employee files, medical record reviews, assessment of the clinic and verification of compliance with the Rural Health and Emergency Preparedness regulations. The preliminary results of the survey found BMC's Rural Health Clinic to have zero citations!

**THANK YOU** to our staff for being 100% committed to our patient's safety and quality of care everyday!





# COVID-19

## AVAILABLE

Getting vaccinated does not need to be a stressful process. Here is an overview of what you can expect throughout the COVID-19 vaccination process, how you can make it smooth and stress-free, and how to stay safe until you are fully vaccinated.

BMC offers the Pfizer vaccine by appointment only. Please call 715-463-5353 to schedule an appointment.

### Know the vaccine appointment basics

- The COVID-19 vaccine is free for all. An ID or insurance is not required to get vaccinated.
- Vaccine recipients ages 12 to 17 require parent consent.
- Postpone your appointment if you don't feel well, have COVID-19, were exposed to COVID-19, or received monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma treatment for COVID-19 in the last 90 days.
- The Pfizer vaccine requires that you receive two doses, so you will need to plan for two appointments.
- It takes two weeks after your second dose to be fully protected, or fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

### Tips for your vaccination appointment

- Wear a face mask.
- Wear short sleeves.
- Arrive on time.
- Bring your ID if you have one.
- If you have insurance, provide your insurance information. No charges will be transferred to you. If you do not have insurance, do not worry. Insurance is not required.
- Maintain 6 feet of distance between you, other patients, and staff when possible.
- If it is your second appointment, bring your vaccination record card.
- Know what to expect

### Before getting vaccinated

- Continue to wear a mask in public indoor spaces, physically distance, and wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- Reschedule your appointment if you don't feel well, have COVID-19, were exposed to COVID-19, or received monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma treatment for COVID-19 in the last 90 days.
- Drinking plenty of water, getting a good night's rest, and eating a balanced meal before your appointment may help lessen possible side effects.

# COVID-19 Vaccine

## GET IT AT BMC



### After vaccination

- Immediately after your first dose, you will be observed for at least 15 minutes. If you experience any immediate reactions, make sure to report them to medical staff right away.
- Shortly after your first dose, you may experience mild side effects such as:
  - Fever
  - Chills
  - Tiredness
  - Headaches
  - Pain or swelling on your arm where you got the vaccine

These are common signs that your immune system is strengthening its response to the virus. They usually go away within a day or two. Even if you experience side effects from the first dose, it is very important that you get your second dose, so you have full protection.

Discomfort from fever or pain is normal. However, contact a health care provider if redness or tenderness of the arm where you got the vaccine increases after 24 hours or your side effects worry you or last longer than a few days. If you are having a medical emergency, call 911.

### Until you are fully vaccinated

You are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two weeks after your second dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Until then, continue to wear a mask in public indoor spaces, physically distance, wash or sanitize your hands frequently and follow CDC guidance for choosing safer activities.

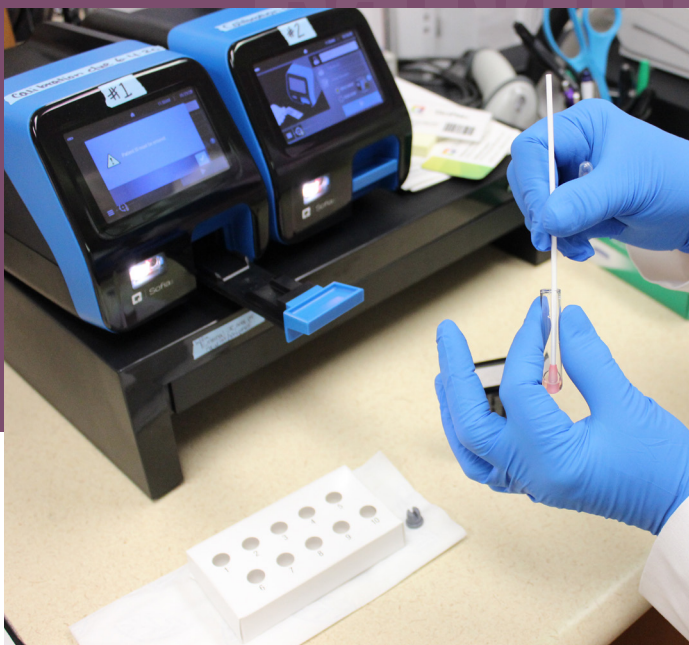
After you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you can start doing things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic. Learn more about what you can do after becoming fully vaccinated by visiting DHS website: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-after.htm](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-after.htm)

### Don't forget!

Follow this checklist after you receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

- Sign up for v-safe- the new smartphone-based tool for personalized health check-ins, easy reporting of side effects, and a reminder to get your second dose. Follow instructions on the v-safe handout your health care provider gave you.
- Save your vaccination card- Your vaccination card has information on when and where you received your vaccine as well as other helpful information related to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Plan your second dose, if necessary.





## COVID-19 PREVENTION EFFORTS

**A**t BMC we strive to prepare, prevent, and protect our patients and community from COVID-19. To provide safe, high-quality care for every patient, the efforts highlighted below will help us do just that.

### Ionization

BMC installed an ionization system into the HVAC systems. This technology uses specialized tubes that take oxygen molecules from the air and convert them into charged atoms that then cluster around microparticles, surrounding and deactivating harmful substances like airborne mold, bacteria, allergens, and viruses. They also attach to expelled breath droplets and dust particles that can transport viruses, enlarging them so they are more easily caught in filters. It is an active process that provides continuous disinfection on surfaces and in the air. The ionization system has been installed in all of BMC's roof top units and in the Continuing Care Center.

### Negative Pressure Rooms

Last fall, BMC installed three more negative pressure rooms, also called isolation rooms, in the Medical/Surgical Department. These rooms keep patients with infectious illnesses, or those susceptible to infections isolated to prevent airborne diseases from escaping the room and infecting other people. A machine pulls air into the room then it filters the air before moving it outside.

Two more negative pressure rooms were also installed this past spring in the Emergency Department. BMC now has a total of six negative pressure rooms.

### PCR Testing

BMC's Laboratory upgraded the COVID-19 testing platform to a molecular test, also known as a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. This COVID-19 test is very accurate and detects genetic material of the virus if you are currently infected. COVID-19 variants and other infectious diseases can also be detected with the PCR test and is one of the many reasons BMC has selected this platform of testing. Up to 12 samples can be processed at a time and results can be available in about 60 minutes. This new testing is available at BMC.

### Telehealth Appointments

In the Clinic setting, to slow the spread of COVID-19 while still providing needed care to our community, BMC has transitioned to utilizing telehealth clinic appointments. With a Telehealth visit, patients can meet with a provider on their smart phone or other device while staying safe at home. When you schedule an appointment, our staff will provide you with instructions needed for your Telehealth visit. Please note, some types of visits would still require an in-person visit.

Examples of eligible Telehealth visits include: annual wellness visits, chronic bronchitis, depression/anxiety/ADHD, diarrhea, follow up Emergency Department visit, follow up to workers compensation, pink eye, post-hospital check, rash, seasonal allergies, skin infection/insect bite, some medication checks, and test results review.

In the inpatient setting, we can provide virtual care via a telehospitalist device. This allows us to connect to tertiary care specialists and to expand our reach to new service providers that work hand in hand with BMC staff to ensure comprehensive care close to home.

We have embraced these new technologies and will continue to utilize them to live up to our commitment to your well-being and safety.



# BMC's Community Memorial Garden

The Burnett Medical Center Foundation has a new community memorial garden. The memorial garden is in the roundabout at the North Continuing Care Center and Visitor entrance. The garden has a brick pathway leading to a flagpole and a brick patio. The brick patio includes customized engraved bricks that can be purchased to showcase those we love who have passed away. The Burnett Medical Center Foundation is selling these engraved bricks to those who would like to honor or remember a loved one(s). All proceeds will be going to the Burnett Medical Center Foundation to advance healthcare for patients and residents. All other donations are welcome.

If you have any questions, would like to order a brick(s), or donate money towards the garden, please visit <https://www.burnettmedicalcenter.com/about-us/foundation/community-memorial-garden/> or contact BMC's Marketing Department at **715-463-7285**.







# BURNETT MEDICAL CENTER

257 W St. George Ave.  
Grantsburg, WI 54840  
715-463-5353 | 800-293-5353

[www.burnettmedicalcenter.com](http://www.burnettmedicalcenter.com)

NON-PROFIT ORG  
POSTAGE PAID  
EDDM  
GRANTSBURG, WI  
PERMIT NO. 76

ECRWSS EDDM

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

## EDITOR: Halle Pardun

©Burnett Medical Center 2021  
Information may be reprinted  
with written consent.

**HOMETOWN HEALTH** is published for the patients and friends of Burnett Medical Center. Information in this publication is not meant to replace the advice of a personal healthcare provider.

## FREE COVID-19 VACCINE MOBILE CLINICS

No Appointment Needed

### AUGUST 2021

J&J and Moderna vaccines are available to individuals 18+. Pfizer is available to individuals 12+ at mobile clinics. Call for Gov. Center Pfizer availability  
**715-485-8400**



### Menards St. Croix Falls

Saturday, August 21st  
10am-3pm

### Polk County Government Center

Tuesday, August 24th  
9am-3pm

### Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church Balsam Lake

Wednesday,  
August 25th  
8am-2pm

### Burnett County Government Center

Saturday, August 28th  
10am-3pm

### Polk County Government Center

Tuesday, August 31st  
9am-3pm