

August 19, 2021

Dear members of the SUNY Upstate transplant patient community,

As you may be aware, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has approved the use of booster vaccine for transplant recipients who have already received full vaccination against COVID infection.

That means if you have already completed Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, you can receive a booster injection. This has been decided because patients who are taking antirejection medication do not respond as well to vaccination as others. Based on a review of our own patients who were tested for response to vaccination, only about one third showed a response. New clinical studies have shown that a booster injection increases the chance of a response to vaccination for transplant recipients.

What does this mean for you?

1. We recommend that you receive a booster injection if you have already had Pfizer or Moderna vaccination. You can receive the booster at any pharmacy or clinic that offers vaccination. You can identify yourself as a transplant recipient who is eligible for the booster. If you are refused for any reason, we will provide you with documentation of your eligibility.
2. You should wait four weeks after completing vaccination before receiving the booster injection.
3. We recommend that you receive booster from the same brand as your first two injections. However, if that is not possible, it is OK to receive booster from the other brand.
4. Even after booster vaccination, you should continue to take precautions to mask and distance whenever you leave your home. The booster vaccination still cannot guarantee complete protection from COVID, but we believe that it will help protect you from serious infection that ends in hospitalization or death.
5. If you have not received any vaccination, PLEASE do so as soon as possible. Use of the vaccine in millions of people to date has shown that risks are very, very low. Your risk of becoming seriously ill and even dying from COVID infection is very much higher, and we want you to be as safe as possible.

We hope that this information answers some of the more frequently asked questions. If you have further questions, please contact us. Above all, stay safe and well.

The SUNY Upstate Transplant Team