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For Immediate Release

Walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinic to be held May 1; no appointment necessary

MORGANTOWN, WV (April 23, 2021) — A walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinic that will be held from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, May 1 will allow anyone 16 years and older who wants a jab to get one without an appointment.

“We want to make sure we are reaching out to everybody to do everything we can to get them vaccinated,” said Dr. Lee B. Smith, Monongalia County Health Department executive director and county health officer.

The walk-in clinic will take place at the old Sears building at the Morgantown Mall as part of the Greater Monongalia County COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic, operated by MCHD, WVU Medicine, Mon Health System and other partners. Please bring ID and wear a mask.

Individuals who want to get a COVID-19 vaccine on a different day can do so by making an appointment at Vaccine.WVUMedicine.org or by calling 833-795-SHOT (833-795-7468).

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been both found to be safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 and can lessen symptoms and prevent death in those who might get the virus following a vaccine.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the vaccine also might help protect those around the vaccinated individual and is an important tool to help stop the COVID-19 pandemic.

West Virginia received national media attention for its successful COVID-19 vaccination rollout in which members of the general public, starting with those in their 80s and older in early January, were allowed to get inoculated sooner than people in many other states.

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“Now, we are happy to be able to offer it to anyone 16 years and older,” Dr. Smith said.

However, the number of individuals seeking a vaccine is diminishing, Dr. Smith added. “And we haven’t yet reached our targets. Gov. Jim Justice wants to see a 70% vaccination rate before he’ll remove the mask mandate.”

According to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, as of Friday, 41.5% of Monongalia County residents are fully vaccinated, while at least 51.4% individuals 18 and older have had at least one dose.

Complicating the situation has been the arrival in Monongalia County of three variants: the United Kingdom (U.K.) variant [B.1.1.7] and the California variant, which has two mutations [B.1.427/B.1.429].

“These variants of concern are both more infectious, and the U.K. variant is associated with an increased risk of death,” Dr. Smith said. “These mutations occur on the outside of the virus and change the way they adhere to human cells, but do not change how the virus behaves. This means the illness looks the same but may be more severe.”

These variants make getting a COVID-19 vaccine even more important, as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are considered effective against the variants.

Individuals who plan to get a vaccine should not have had any other vaccines two weeks before and then two weeks after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. This applies to both doses. The Pfizer vaccines are administered three weeks apart and the Moderna, four.

In addition to getting a vaccine, Monongalia County residents should continue other measures to prevent illness. These include wearing a mask in public buildings, keeping a social distance of at least 6 feet from others and washing your hands often and thoroughly.

Also, MCHD still offers testing on Mondays and Fridays from 9-11 a.m. at the WVU Rec Center. “Testing is still an important tool in the fight against COVID-19 because many people do not develop symptoms, or are asymptomatic but still infectious,” Dr. Smith said.

More information on COVID-19 vaccines can be found at monchd.org/testing--vaccines.html.

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