

COVID-19 FAQs

October 1, 2021

Q: Is getting COVID-19 better than getting the vaccine? Now that your body has seen the virus and fought it, isn't that the same as what the vaccine does?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Your body is able to create antibodies to a natural infection and to the vaccine. Natural infection antibodies are able to recognize more parts of the virus because the entire virus was present during the infection. Vaccine antibodies are antibodies to the spike protein. There is evidence that shows that natural infection and vaccine induced immunity are similar in their ability to prevent further infections, severe disease and death. There is not a predictable time period for natural immunity to last. Vaccine related immunity is still showing strong protection against reinfection and severe disease especially for individuals <65, 8 months out from vaccination. Currently, vaccination is the only way to satisfy vaccine mandates as well for work and entertainment. We do not have a measure for protective natural immunity.

Q: I am trying to register my digital COVID-19 vaccine record as I received the vaccine through AltaMed. I am asked for the email address or my phone number, and I have tried to use both my cell phone and my AltaMed email address, but they do not work. What phone number or email address should I be entering to upload my information with the CDC?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Employee health recorded your vaccines into our electronic medical record and shared that information with the California Immunization Registry which reports into the national registry. When completing the vaccines early on, cell phone numbers and email addresses were not routinely collected for employees. I would recommend that you establish a sign on for MyAltaMed.net to not only get an electronic copy of your vaccine record from the AltaMed system, but also to update your contact information. This will then be shared with the registries and will be able to be located when getting a digital vaccine record with the state or healthvana.

Q: My cousin is 30 weeks pregnant and has vaccine hesitancy. Is there any new info on covid vaccine in pregnancy?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: The national registries through Vsafe and VAERS (vaccine adverse event reporting system) has collected data on tens of thousands of women that have been vaccinated shortly before and during pregnancy. They have not found any signals that the vaccine has caused any adverse outcomes to the pregnancy or the baby in utero. The American College of Obstetrics strongly encourages all women that are planning pregnancy or are pregnant to get vaccinated as it is proven safe and effective at preventing covid during pregnancy and the catastrophic outcomes associated with getting infected with covid during pregnancy.

Q: If an AltaMed employee refuses to get the COVID vaccine, what are the consequences?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: This has been answered by Human Resources and our updated COVID-19 vaccine policy.

Q: With the highly contagious Delta variant surge going on throughout the country, is AltaMed considering delaying the date for all staff to return to work from the office? I feel that it is not safe to return quite yet.

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Return to Work was approved by the Board and moved to October 5, 2021.

Q: What type of face shield is recommended? I have used one that has a foam/sponge running across my forehead, but notice it gets very foggy. I have also used one that resembles eyeglasses with a shield attached. This one is much more comfortable, but I fear that gap that forms between my forehead and the shield defeats the purpose. What are your thoughts and suggestions for a face shield?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: It is best to have a shield that protects the gap between your forehead and the shield yes, but I appreciate the trouble with shields fogging up. Our patients should be masked at all times so the shield attached to the goggles should be sufficient for protection. If you will be conducting an activity that may cause aerosols from an unmasked patient, I would wear the more protective face shield.

Q: Can we decline the vaccine and still be employed with AltaMed?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: This has been answered by Human Resources and our updated COVID-19 vaccine policy.

Q: If we received our COVID vaccines at Altamed, was the information sent to the California Immunization Registry?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Employee health recorded your vaccines into our electronic medical record and shared that information with the California Immunization Registry which reports into the national registry. When completing the vaccines early on, cell phone numbers and email addresses were not routinely collected for employees. I would recommend that you establish a sign on for MyAltaMed.net to not only get an electronic copy of your vaccine record from the AltaMed system, but also to update you contact information. This will then be shared with the registries and will be able to be located when getting a digital vaccine record with the state or healthvana.

Q: Can employees choose to be tested at work even if we are fully vaccinated?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: We only offer testing to employees if they have had an exposure to COVID or have symptoms that may be COVID for fully vaccinated staff.

Q: Does the AMU building have HEPA filters on each floor? If not, could I bring my personal HEPA filter for my desk area?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: The 2035 Camfield Building does not have HEPA filters on each floor, however, our HVAC system located on the rooftop has filters at a level of MERV 13 and frequently turns over the air per CDC recommendations for air exchanges.

Q: Are we required to take the third booster COVID shot?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: At this time the third booster is not required by the CDC. If the CDC requires third boosters, we will require that as well per our vaccination policy.

Q: Does AltaMed have any plans for a Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record similar to the one California Stats has? <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Employee health recorded your vaccines into our electronic medical record and shared that information with the California Immunization Registry which reports into the national registry. When completing the vaccines early on, cell phone numbers and email addresses were not routinely collected for employees. I would recommend that you establish a sign on for MyAltaMed.net to not only get an electronic copy of your vaccine record from the AltaMed system, but also to update you contact information. This will then be shared with the registries and will be able to be located when getting a digital vaccine record with the state or healthvana.

Q: For those of us who have received our COVID vaccines at AltaMed, how do we go about getting a digital copy of proof of vaccination?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: Employee health recorded your vaccines into our electronic medical record and shared that information with the California Immunization Registry which reports into the national registry. When completing the vaccines early on, cell phone numbers and email addresses were not routinely collected for employees. I would recommend that you establish a sign on for MyAltaMed.net to not only get an electronic copy of your vaccine record from the AltaMed system, but also to update you contact information. This will then be shared with the registries and will be able to be located when getting a digital vaccine record with the state or healthvana.

Q: I am inquiring into, if AltaMed/Altura requires employees to be vaccinated, what if they have already had COVID and now have natural immunity antibodies? What is AltaMed's stance on natural immunity for those employees who have already being exposed to COVID 19?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: According to the CDC natural immunity is not a replacement for vaccination. We are following the CDC and state of California health officer order for vaccine requirements in healthcare.

Q: I received two doses of the Moderna COVID vaccine through my provider (CVS/Optum). To receive a booster, should I wait for the FDA to approve the Moderna booster (under review currently) and return to my provider or obtain a Pfizer booster (if eligible) through AltaMed?

From the COVID-19 Response Team

A: At this time, we recommend that we wait for Moderna to approve a third dose booster for those that were fully vaccinated with Moderna.