

COVID-19 Health System Updates

February 2, 2022, Wednesday

This week's update includes a vaccine-related research study and an honor for one of our leaders. But I'm sure many of you have questions about the New York State vaccine booster mandate, so I want to start this week by telling you about two new resources.

We've updated our [vaccine mandate toolkit](#) to focus on the boosters, and it now includes a list of [frequently asked questions](#), which is also attached. Here are two highlights:

- If you lost your vaccine card and you were vaccinated in New York City, you can retrieve the information [online](#).
- If you get COVID-19 before you get your booster, you may qualify for an extension to the booster deadline, but only if you [report your positive test](#) to Employee Health Services (EHS). You must then get your booster shot between 10 and 30 days after your symptoms began or after you received your positive test result.

I also want to repeat: **you must get your booster shot and report it to EHS to satisfy the state's mandate and avoid termination from your job, even if you got the shot at Mount Sinai.**

The boosters are safe and, as I [noted last week](#), highly effective at preventing bad outcomes from COVID-19. I really hope you will choose to get one and remain part of our Mount Sinai family. If you have any questions that aren't answered elsewhere, please email COVIDQuestions@mountsinai.org and someone will get back to you.

As of this morning, we had 327 inpatients with COVID-19 in our hospitals, 55 of whom were in critical care. The New York State seven-day average test positivity rates as of yesterday were 4.3 percent for New York City, 7.6 percent for Long Island, and 5.8 percent for the mid-Hudson region.

[Focus Groups on Vaccine](#)

[The Institute for Health Equity Research](#) is conducting focus groups with New York City residents who recently—late September and onward—got vaccinated against COVID-19. The data we obtain may be helpful in developing future vaccination messages and strategies.

Participants will receive a \$50 gift card. To take part, individuals must be at least 18 years old, a resident of New York City, and willing to share opinions on COVID-19 vaccines and clinical trials.

If you would like to learn more, email Timnit.ghebretinsae@mountsinai.org. These focus groups will take place in the next couple of weeks.

Praise for Judith A. Aberg, MD

One of our leading COVID-19 experts, Judith A. Aberg, MD, received a really nice letter recently from Francis S. Collins, MD, who stepped down late last year as Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Anthony S. Fauci, MD. They were thanking her for her contributions to the NIH [“Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Treatment Guidelines.”](#) Drs. Collins and Fauci wrote, “Your expertise has been invaluable. Your devotion to the process, participating in virtual meetings that typically occurred multiple times per week, and numerous hours spent in writing and editing content, are much appreciated.”

We are all proud of Dr. Aberg as well. She and so many others at Mount Sinai have contributed not only to our own response to the pandemic, but to the world’s understanding of the disease. Each of you has made a real difference, and we are all in your debt.

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