



# Should You Move to a PSL Community During COVID-19?



PRESBYTERIAN  
SENIOR LIVING

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# Introduction

Without a doubt, the coronavirus changed the world. Before the COVID-19 vaccines were developed, the threat of exposure forced all of us to adjust our lifestyles. We practiced social distancing from one another, stocked up on masks and hand sanitizer, and stayed at home more than ever before. For many, especially seniors living alone, the days could be lonely and uncertain.



Once the vaccines became available, life gradually started to return to a new kind of normal for those who received it. Seniors were, and continue to be, the age group with the highest vaccination rates. While no vaccine offers complete protection, the three currently approved for COVID-19 protection are helping people avoid serious illness and hospitalization.

Though the virus continues to mutate, the scientific community is working diligently to combat the evolving variants. This includes the use of booster shots. Despite the progress made, fears about exposure to the virus linger. Existing health concerns are compounded by the emotional uncertainty of contracting the virus. This can take a toll on people of all ages, but especially older adults trying to limit public outings and gatherings.

For seniors in particular, isolation and loneliness are linked to an increased risk for a variety of health problems, ranging from depression to diabetes and stroke. It's just one of the many reasons why now is a good time to consider moving to a well-prepared continuing care retirement community, like Presbyterian Senior Living.

In this guide, we'll tackle a variety of topics, such as vaccine success, PSL staff and resident vaccination rates, and how we keep the residents we serve engaged and safe. This is important information for families to consider as they contemplate the timing of a senior loved one's move.

# The Facts About COVID-19 Vaccines

With misinformation about COVID-and the vaccines spreading rampantly, we believe it's important for seniors and their families to know that at PSL communities, we trust in and rely on the science.

In this section we will talk about the COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for use. We'll explain the difference between the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) emergency use authorization and a full approval. And we'll discuss the issue of booster shots—who might need them and when.

Finally, we'll share some important statistics. Among them are the hospitalization rates for vaccinated versus unvaccinated people, and what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other experts have to say about getting a booster shot.

## COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved for Use in the U.S.

Currently, there are three different vaccines that are widely available to adults living in the United States. All three of these vaccines were initially administered under an FDA approval known as Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)\*.

Simply put, the EUA means each vaccine went through a three-phase clinical trial and at least half of the phase three participants were followed for two months or more after the trial's completion. The process is rigorous and ongoing. It includes safety monitoring and continuous follow-up with those who have been vaccinated.

In August of 2021, the FDA issued full approval for the first COVID-19 vaccine, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. It will now be known and marketed as Comirnaty. Full approval is granted for those aged 16 and up, with the vaccine available under EUA for those between the ages of 12 and 15.

Let's take a quick look at each of the current COVID-19 vaccines, beginning with the two mRNA vaccines\*. This term refers to the fact that both vaccines utilize a technology that delivers genetic code to cells with instructions that activate the immune system to fight:

\*<https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines/emergency-use-authorization-vaccines-explained>

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** For those ages 12 and above, this is a two-shot vaccine with dosages given 21 days apart. Full vaccination will be achieved at two weeks after the second shot.
- **Moderna:** Another two-shot vaccine, this is available to those aged 18 and older. The dosages are administered 28 days apart. Like the others, full vaccination occurs two weeks after the second shot.

An additional vaccine that uses a different technology is proving to be effective, too:

- **Johnson & Johnson's Janssen:** This is a single shot vaccine that can be given to those age 18 and older. Again, full vaccination is achieved after two weeks.

As research continues to unfold and new variants of the coronavirus develop, experts say COVID-19 vaccine booster shots may be necessary. Here's what we know about boosters as we head into the fall of 2021.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots

While the COVID-19 vaccines are considered to be highly effective, including against the Delta variant, evidence indicates many people could benefit from a booster shot. In August of 2021, health officials authorized a third shot of the Pfizer vaccine for people with weakened immune systems. As of September, 2021, Moderna was seeking FDA approval for their booster.

Nearly 1 million Covid-19 vaccine booster shots were administered by the end of August, 2021 according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These were primarily given to adults with cancer, HIV, and those who have undergone an organ transplant.

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices continues to explore the best milestones for others to receive the booster. Current research seems to indicate people who received Modern or Pfizer should receive a

booster eight months after their second dose was administered. Because the Johnson & Johnson vaccine wasn't given in the United States until 70 days after the two others, there is less data available to make this determination, but it is believed to be similar.





## Hospitalization Rates Among Vaccinated and Non-vaccinated People

It's true that late summer and early fall have seen an escalation in cases of COVID-19 once again, primarily due to the Delta variant. There is one thing those who are hospitalized have in common—98.3 percent of them are unvaccinated\*\*\*.

While there are breakthrough cases of vaccinated people testing positive for coronavirus, few became seriously ill. The numbers speak for themselves—those who are unvaccinated are five times more likely to contract COVID-19. Depending on an individual's personal health and location, people are up to 29 times more likely to end up in the hospital from it\*\*\*\*.

\*\*\*<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/unvaccinated-covid-patients-cost-the-u-s-health-system-billions-of-dollars/>

\*\*\*\*<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/24/cdc-study-shows-unvaccinated-people-are-29-times-more-likely-to-be-hospitalized-with-covid.htm>

# Confidence in Care at Presbyterian Senior Living

*Is now a good time to encourage a parent or other older adult in the family to move to a senior living community?*

During the best of times, the decision to move to a senior living community can be complex. Combined with concerns about the lingering coronavirus, questions about safety come up more often than not.

At Presbyterian Senior Living, we're glad that families are asking these questions and sharing their concerns. By doing so, we have an opportunity to discuss all of the reasons why now is a good time to move.

We can also share the steps our communities are taking to keep residents, staff, and visitors safe. From high vaccination rates to transparent infection control policies, here's what you should know to feel confident in PSL communities and the care we provide.

## Following the Science

Because we believe in the science, PSL requires every employee to be vaccinated against COVID-19. At each of our communities, you'll find that nearly 100% of our employees are fully vaccinated. We also encourage residents who are eligible to receive their vaccine, as well. The result is a 96% vaccination rate among residents.

In addition to a high vaccinate rate, we've also developed strict infection-control practices. Here are just a few:

- Stringent hand-hygiene policies for all employees to follow.
- Meticulous cleaning processes for high-touch areas of the community and for resident rooms.
- Careful monitoring of the surrounding community for changes in infection rates so we can respond quickly and appropriately.
- Visitor screening procedures for families and vendors upon arrival.
- Safe, strategic processes for integrating new residents into our communities.





This is a combination that has helped us minimize the spread of COVID-19 across our campuses.

Despite everyone's best efforts, however, there are no guarantees when it comes to preventing coronavirus. This is true whether an older adult lives in a private residence or in a senior living environment.

As soon as we learn of a potential exposure in one of our communities, we immediately implement the protocols we've developed to mitigate the spread of the virus. Depending on the situation, this may include notifying public health officials, isolating residents and staff who may have been exposed, universal COVID-19 testing of staff and residents, and enhancing personal protective equipment. The situation is continuously monitored with adjustments made as necessary.

We believe these stringent protocols are what has helped us keep the number of residents and staff who test positive for coronavirus so low. It is our hope that by being transparent in sharing this information, your family will feel confident in our communities and the

systems we've created to protect residents and staff against COVID-19. Then you will be able to see your family elder enjoy the many benefits of moving to a continuing care retirement community.

## Benefits of Moving to a PSL Community Now

From well-balanced meals to a wide variety of activities and wellness programs, an older adult's quality of life is often higher in a senior living community. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are some of the many reasons to move to a Presbyterian Senior Living community:

- **Care solutions to accommodate changing needs.**

While an older adult might move to a senior community when they are active and independent, a continuing care community provides support as a person's needs change. Knowing they won't have to move again, gives both the senior and their family peace of mind.

Caregivers are on-site around the clock to provide residents with the assistance they need. This might be a helping hand to take a shower or support with medication management. During times like the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical team members can identify small changes in a resident's health and intervene quickly.

- **Healthy nutrition with a choice of dining options.**

At the height of the COVID-19 crisis last year, adult children often found themselves struggling to support a senior loved one's nutritional needs while maintaining a safe distance. This was especially true for those families separated by many miles. At PSL communities, we plan for every contingency.

During normal times, residents have a variety of choices for dining. They decide when, where, and



with whom they wish to enjoy a meal. All meals are healthy and delicious. And special diets, such as low sodium or diabetic, can be accommodated.

If current conditions necessitate it, a community may move to socially distanced meal services to keep residents and staff safe. This might involve serving meals in resident apartments or suites or limiting the number of people in the dining room at one time.

- **Variety of daily activities and events to join.**

From computer classes to art workshops and movie nights, senior living communities offer a wide range of life-enrichment activities and special events. During normal times, residents are able to participate in as many or as few activities as they choose to each day. Research has shown that socializing during retirement is linked to a longer, healthier life.

With concerns about COVID-19 lingering, PSL communities have pivoted to offer small group activities that allow residents to stay engaged while maintaining a safe social distance. Outdoor activities are encouraged as weather permits. We've also helped residents connect with online cultural programs, such as art museum tours and virtual theater performances.

To further provide residents with meaningful activity during COVID-19, PSL communities implemented social engagement platforms, such as Connected Living and Eversound. LinkedSenior is another. Each of these technologies is designed to promote in-room resident engagement, ideal for times like these.

- **Wellness programs to promote healthy lifestyles.**

Quality-focused senior living communities place great importance on health and wellness activities. They offer fitness programs, like yoga, stretching classes, light weight training, and low-impact cardio, several times each day.

You'll also find activities that nurture emotional wellness, such as meditation, journaling, and gardening. Each of these can help to reduce stress which promotes overall better health.

- **Maintenance-free living to give seniors more flexibility.**

If your loved one has been living in a private residence, you know all too well the burdens and expenses that come with home ownership. From homeowner's insurance to lawn service and appliance repair, it can be time-consuming and expensive. While families often try to assist with household tasks, that usually only works on a temporary basis.





By moving to a senior living community, worries about finding contractors and repairmen can be left behind. Every chore, including maintenance, housekeeping, lawn care, and snow removal, is taken care of.

- **Transportation and other convenient services.**

There are many other conveniences offered by senior living communities, such as transportation and on-site postal services. They make everyday life easier for the resident and their family members. Most communities have regular transportation routes that include restaurants, shopping malls, and other popular local destinations. In addition, residents can usually schedule transportation for private appointments and outings.

On-site beauty/barber salons are another service offered at a senior living community. These make it more convenient for residents to get a haircut or a manicure on a regular basis.

*Add it all up and you'll see all the reasons why there's no better time to make a move to a PSL community!*

# Take the Next Step

You can take the next step by calling the Presbyterian Senior Living community of your choice to learn more. Have your questions answered and schedule an in-person or virtual tour with one of our experienced team members today.

**CATHEDRAL VILLAGE** 600 East Cathedral Road • Philadelphia, PA 19128  
(215) 487-1300 • [www.cathedralvillage.com](http://www.cathedralvillage.com)

**GLEN MEADOWS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY** 11630 Glen Arm Road • Glen Arm, MD 21057 (410) 319-5000 • [www.glenmeadows.org](http://www.glenmeadows.org)

**GREEN RIDGE VILLAGE** 210 Big Spring Road • Newville, PA 17241  
(717) 776-8200 • [www.greenridgevillage.org](http://www.greenridgevillage.org)

**KIRKLAND VILLAGE** One Kirkland Village Circle • Bethlehem, PA 18017  
(610) 691-4500 • [www.kirklandvillage.org](http://www.kirklandvillage.org)

**THE LONG COMMUNITY** 600 E. Roseville Road • Lancaster, PA 17601  
(717) 381-4900 • [www.longcommunityhighland.org](http://www.longcommunityhighland.org)

**PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGE AT HOLLIDAYSBURG** 220 Newry Street • Hollidaysburg, PA 16648 (814) 693-4000 • [www.hollidaysburgretirement.org](http://www.hollidaysburgretirement.org)

**QUINCY VILLAGE** 6596 Orphanage Road • Waynesboro, PA 17268  
(717) 749-2300 • [www.quincyvillage.org](http://www.quincyvillage.org)

**ST. ANDREW'S VILLAGE** 1155 Indian Springs Road • Indiana, PA 15701  
(724) 464-1600 • [www.standrewsvillage.org](http://www.standrewsvillage.org)

**WARE PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGE** 7 East Locust Street • Oxford, PA 19363  
(610) 998-2400 • [www.warepresbyterian.org](http://www.warepresbyterian.org)

**WESTMINSTER VILLAGE AT DOVER** 191 Westminster Drive • Dover, DE 19904  
(302) 744-3600 • [www.wmvdover.org](http://www.wmvdover.org)

**WESTMINSTER WOODS AT HUNTINGDON** 360 Westminster Drive • Huntingdon, PA 16652  
(814) 644-2000 • [www.westminsterretirement.org](http://www.westminsterretirement.org)

**WINDY HILL VILLAGE** 100 Dogwood Drive • Philipsburg, PA 16866  
(814) 342-8400 • [www.windyhillvillage.org](http://www.windyhillvillage.org)





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