



CLL SOCIETY

Interim Public Health Recommendations for People Fully Vaccinated Against COVID-19: Explaining to Friends and Family Why They Have Different Significance for the Vaccinated Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL) Population

The CDC on 3/8/21 issued interim public health recommendations for fully vaccinated people that let vaccinated individuals get together with others who are vaccinated and loosened up restrictions on some but not all social behaviors post-vaccination.

CLL Society has several comments and recommendations related to this good news.

The CDC's recommendations are not set in stone but are intended to provide reasonable guidelines. Also, their recommendations are very likely to change in quick order, especially given the recent pace of newly emerging scientific data and the vaccination rollout in the US.

Most critically, it is important to note that the CDC's recommendations only apply to those with a *normal* immune system. Sadly, everyone with CLL, a blood cancer of the immune system, has impaired immunity.

We honestly do not know whether the vaccine will work to prevent COVID-19 for those with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. What we do know is that CLL patients' responses to the vaccine are at best unpredictable, and when CLL patients contract COVID-19 they are at a much higher risk for bad outcomes.

We recommend that CLL patients, even when vaccinated, still adhere to the three tried and true mandates for COVID-19 safety which are to maintain social distancing, handwashing, and wear a well-fitted face mask.

Thanks for understanding why most CLL patients are still stubbornly insisting on masking, hand washing, and social distancing even post-vaccination. Their lives depend on it.

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