**SAMPLE After Care Sheet**

**Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty and Moderna Spikevax Omicron XBB.1.5 COVID-19 mRNA vaccines**

**Updated November 2023**

**What should I do right after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?**

**Note: "you" refers to the individual being vaccinated**

* **Wait for at least 15 minutes** after receiving the vaccine. Longer waiting times of 30 minutes may be recommended if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy. Though uncommon, fainting or allergic reactions can occur after vaccination. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy), swelling of the face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing. The clinic staff are prepared to manage these events should they occur.
* **Immediately inform a health care provider** at the clinic if you feel unwell while waiting. Do not leave the clinic if you feel unwell.
* **Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials** to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while at the clinic.
* Use the **alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands** before leaving the clinic.
* **Do not operate a vehicle** or other form of transportation for at least 15 to 30 minutes after being vaccinated (as advised by the health care provider) or if you are feeling unwell.

**What to expect in the next few days?**

* Side effects can develop within a few days after receiving the vaccine. Although most of these side effects are not serious, they may make the vaccinated person feel unwell for a few days; they will go away on their own.
  + The most common side effect is pain where the needle was given; swelling or redness where the needle was given may also occur. A cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack where the vaccine was given may help.
  + Other symptoms may include tiredness, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting or swollen glands in the underarm.
  + If needed, pain or fever medication (such as acetaminophen) may help with pain or fever.
  + Check with your health care provider or local public health department if you need advice about medication.
* Serious side effects after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, **should you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms that could be an allergic reaction, call 9-1-1 right away**. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:
  + Difficulty breathing
  + Hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
  + Swelling of the face, tongue or throat
* **Seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms that could indicate heart inflammation (myocarditis or pericarditis)**such as:
  + Chest pain
  + Shortness of breath
  + Fast or irregular heartbeat
* Bell’s palsy (weakened or inability to move the muscles of the face) has rarely been reported after mRNA vaccines. Seek medical attention if you experience facial weakness or drooping or other symptoms involving the face.
* Other side effects such as unusual sensations (such as numbness or tingling), dizziness or skin rashes have also been reported.
* If you have any concerns about the symptoms that develop after receiving the vaccine, contact a health care provider or the local public health department for advice. Any serious or unusual side effects after vaccination should be reported to your local public health department.
* If you need to receive additional doses of COVID-19 vaccines, tell the person providing the next dose about any side effects experienced.

**When should the next dose of COVID-19 vaccine be given?**

* For the primary series for children 6 months to under 5 years of age who are NOT immunocompromised, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends 8 weeks between the 2 doses of Moderna Spikevax or 3 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty.
* For the primary series for children 6 months to under 5 years of age who ARE moderately to severely immunocompromised, NACI recommends 4 to 8 weeks between the 3 doses of Moderna Spikevax (or 4 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty, although this is not the preferred product).
* For the primary series for those 5 years of age and older who are not immunocompromised, only 1 dose of XBB.1.5 vaccine is recommended, while 2 doses 4 to 8 weeks apart are recommended for those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised.
* A different schedule may be advised if you started a primary series with an earlier COVID-19 vaccine and are completing it with 1 or more XBB.1.5 vaccines. Consult with a health care provider.
* At this time, individuals whose primary series included the XBB.1.5 COVID-19 vaccine do not require further doses once the primary series is complete. As well, individuals who were previously vaccinated and then received an XBB.1.5 vaccine do not require any further doses at this time.
* After a SARS-CoV-2 infection, NACI suggests waiting 8 weeks to start or complete the primary series (or 4 to 8 weeks for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised) and 6 months after the infection to receive a subsequent dose for those who were previously vaccinated. Shorter intervals may also be used based on recommendations from your health care provider.
* It is very important to stay up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccines. Your health care provider or local public health department can provide advice about vaccine recommendations if you have any questions.
* **Bring your immunization record with you for all vaccines** and tell the person providing the vaccine about any side effects after previous doses.

**Things to remember**

* **Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials** to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
* If possible, **wait at least 2 weeks after vaccination or completing the vaccination series before starting drugs that suppress the immune system,** as recommended by your healthcare provider.
* **Keep your immunization record**in a safe place.