

FIRST COAST Heart & Vascular CENTER

REGARDING COVID VACCINATION AND ADMINISTRATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

First Coast Heart and Vascular is providing the patients of our practice with this physician's statement confirming the presence of a chronic cardiac condition that will qualify you, the patient, as a candidate for the novel Corona virus (COVID-19) vaccines, regardless of age (but excepting pregnant women and children). The currently available FDA –approved COVID vaccines have been rigorously researched and have shown to be effective at reducing the risk of death, hospitalization and COVID infection. While side effects have been reported, the data suggests that side effects of the vaccines are usually mild and of short duration.

The FDA –approved COVID vaccines are recommended for delivery by intramuscular (IM) route. Patients and providers have raised concern about delivery of vaccines via the IM route in patients on blood thinners (anticoagulants or antiplatelet drugs). Recent clinical trial data regarding vaccinations, in general, given to persons on blood thinners has been performed to address this particular question in a scientific fashion, and the data supports IM vaccination as a safe and effective strategy of care in patients on blood thinners.

It is the position of this practice that the relevant medical literature does not suggest increased harm to persons receiving vaccines by the IM route while taking blood thinners. We do not recommend stopping blood thinners prior to IM injection for vaccination. Care should be taken to ensure that specific medications such as warfarin (Coumadin) are dosed appropriately and are within therapeutic range prior to vaccination or any other injection strategies of care. Specifically, the medical literature does not support stopping the anticoagulants Coumadin (warfarin, appropriately dosed), Eliquis (Apixaban), Xarelto (Rivaroxaban), or Pradaxa (Dabigatran) prior to vaccination. Furthermore, the antiplatelet drugs used by many patients, including Plavix (Clopidogrel), Effient (Prasugrel), Brilinta (Ticagrelor) or Aspirin should also not be stopped prior to IM vaccination.

This communication should serve as a clearance letter for these patients specifically addressing these issues, but no other. It is our position that FCHV endorses administration of the vaccine to all of our eligible patients. As always, the health and well-being of our patients is our top priority.

Warm regards,

Van Crisco, MD, FACC, FSCAI

First Coast Heart and Vascular Center

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