

# The Town Crower

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The Monthly Newsletter for SIR Branch 103

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## Stanislaus SIR Branch 103

DEDICATED to the PROMOTION of INDEPENDENCE and DIGNITY in RETIREMENT

### SPECIAL COVID-19 VACCINE EDITION



All of us are under attack right now by a virus, COVID-19. We, as all those over 65 years old, are susceptible to this virus, which could cause death. We need to take action now by seeking a vaccine. This special edition newsletter has been produced to give you information about the vaccine and where you can go to begin the process.

Vaccines help our immune system fight infections in the future. COVID-19 vaccines will protect us from the virus that causes COVID-19 without having to get the illness. It typically takes a few weeks after the last dose in a series to become fully protected. On the days after taking the vaccine, you may have a sore arm, aches, fatigue or fever, but these are not harmful. These symptoms signal that your immune system is developing protection from the virus.

In a race to produce a COVID-19 vaccine, scientists turned to a new technology involving our body's own genetic process. Inside our cells, DNA produces RNA that produces proteins. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines transport RNA in a lipid or fat membrane to our cells via the vaccine. That RNA then instructs our cells to produce a protein like the one found on the surface of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19. Our immune system recognizes the virus's protein as an invader and produces antibodies to block the protein from proliferating in a future infection.

People typically get infected by breathing in airborne droplets from a person who is carrying the virus. The droplets are spread if the carrier coughs, sneezes, talks or just breathes. SARS-CoV-2 has spike proteins on its surface, giving it a "corona" or crown shape. The proteins latch onto receptors on human cells, allowing the virus to invade the cell. As the spike protein attaches to one of our cells, it dramatically changes its shape. Peptides shoot into the cell and pull the cell wall apart, allowing the virus to invade. Once inside, RNA in the virus uses the cell's own genetic process to replicate large quantities of the virus that eventually burst out of the cell. In our bodies, DNA produces RNA that produces proteins. This happens inside our cells. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines take advantage of this natural process by transporting RNA in a lipid or fat membrane to our cells and then instructing our cells to produce a spike protein like the one found on the surface of the virus. RNA vaccines work by getting our cells to produce the spike protein free of any virus. Our immune system recognizes the protein as an invader and produces antibodies to block the protein from binding with receptors in a future attack. In a major breakthrough, scientists at National Institutes of Health and the University of Texas realized that making a vaccine with the proper shaped protein could be much more effective. The antibodies produced as a result of the vaccine remain in our system, ready to bind with the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 in the event of exposure. This blocks the spike protein from binding with healthy cells. The virus is unable to invade our cells. The virus is rendered harmless and is flushed out of our bodies. As we wait to be vaccinated, we can effectively prevent the spread of the virus: Wear a mask in public. Stay at least 6 feet away from others. Wash your hands frequently. Avoid touching your face. Get tested and quarantine if you suspect you may be infected.

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## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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The CDC, Centers for Disease Control, has an excellent website, [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccine](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccine), that gives information about the vaccines. There are sections about:

- frequently asked questions
- facts about COVID-19 vaccines
- benefits of getting vaccinated
- what to expect at your COVID-19 vaccination appointment

## Where can I get a Vaccine?

Stanislaus County has COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics available to all residents of Stanislaus County. There are clinics in Modesto, Turlock, Oakdale and Patterson. The days and times that the clinics are open at listed on the website for Stanislaus County Public Health, [www.schsa.org/coronavirus/vaccine](http://www.schsa.org/coronavirus/vaccine). No appointment is necessary. Proof of residence is required. Stanislaus County is in the process of developing a procedure for those who are unable to wait in lines for a vaccine. Information will be available in the upcoming weeks.

If your insurance provider is **Sutter Health**. Sutter Health provides vaccines for health care workers and for people over 75 year old. You can call (844) 987-6115, Mon-Fri. 7:00 am—6:00 pm, Sat-Sun. 8:00 am-5:00 pm to schedule an appointment. Do not contact your provider's office, they are not able to book appointments or provide scheduling exceptions.

If your insurance provider is **Kaiser Permanente**. Kaiser provides vaccinations for health care workers and people 75 years and older. You need to go to Kaiser's website, [kaiserpermanente.org/health-wellness/coronavirus](http://kaiserpermanente.org/health-wellness/coronavirus), to log on to access the code to make an appointment.

If your insurance provider is **Alignment Healthcare Insurance**. The AllCare Granger Clinic is at 205 W. Granger Ave., Modesto. Call 209-622-4680 for vaccination appointments.

### SIR DISCLAIMER and ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

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