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## **"Vaccinated on the One-Year Anniversary of the Pandemic"**

Bonnie Petry

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# Vaccinated on the One-Year Anniversary of the Pandemic

*Librarian Bonnie Petry of the John M. Pfau Library*

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. On March 11, 2021, I was vaccinated. This is my story.

Anticipating that I would have some sort of reaction to the vaccination, since I always had one with ordinary flu shots, I was determined to choose a vaccination site that was as close to my house as possible. Vaccination phase 1B which included educators began and the hunt was on for an appointment.

I checked the sites I'd chosen a few times and found no appointments. Then, on March 9<sup>th</sup>, quite by chance, I happened to go to the appointment site for the Loma Linda University Drayson Vac Center just as a whole batch of appointments became available. This site was only 8 miles from my house and I could take surface streets to get there. My appointment was for March 11, 2021 at noon.

When I received confirmation for my appointment, I was surprised to learn that I would be getting the J&J one-shot vaccine which the FDA had authorized for emergency use on February 27. I had expected to get either the Pfizer or Moderna version.

Having checked in online at home, I arrived well ahead of time. As I drove past the center to the visitor's parking lot, I was dismayed by the enormous line of people. As I hiked from the parking lot towards the end of that line, I passed a man and a woman coming the other way. "How was it?" I asked.

"Not bad," said the woman. Then she told me that the enormous line was only for the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. I thanked her profusely.

A bit further on, one of the volunteers directed me to check in at the blue tent near the entrance to the center. This included taking my temperature and tagging me with a yellow paper wristband bearing the number 92454 which was not a zip code even though it looked like one. Then I was directed to the line for the J&J vaccine.



It turned out that the center was actually administering first and second dose Pfizer shots as well as the J&J. I am guessing this had a lot to do with the shelf life of the available vaccines and that the first doses of Pfizer were already allocated to specific appointments as the J&J doses undoubtedly were.

There were, then, three lines going into the center and mine was the shortest. Still, there was rather a long wait. One of the volunteers was a runner; he went back and forth between the next few people in each line and the first check in station taking driver's licenses and IDs and returning them along with the half-sheet-size yellow appointment confirmations. But everything seemed very well organized and numerous volunteers ensured that each step of the process went smoothly as people were gradually admitted into the center, checked in at one last point with their insurance cards if available, then channeled towards the correct vaccine givers. Given the magnitude of the vaccination effort, I was impressed.

I got my shot at station number 13 about 1:25 p.m. from a very personable young woman, a graduate of Loma Linda University, who normally works in radiology. I was the first dose of the next fresh batch of 3. Evidently, due to the high perishability of the vaccine once it was removed from refrigeration and loaded into the hypodermic syringes, only 3 doses at a time were distributed to each station. I was then directed to the area for the 15-minute wait for any reactions where I took a seat at 1:30 p.m.

Nurses were supervising people in this area, circulating among the widely spaced chairs. At about 1:40, a nurse asked me how I was feeling, and at that point, other than the pain of the shot, I was fine. Moments after she

walked away, I noticed a faint tingling in my hands which then began randomly moving around my body, mostly on the left side where I'd gotten the shot. I could definitely feel something foreign had entered my body.

The nurse came by again and I told her what I was experiencing; it was difficult to describe clearly. I ended up staying about 45 minutes in the waiting area so they could monitor me. I also experienced a brief numbness of my face and equally brief pain in my shoulders and knees. The random tingling gave way to some random thrumming as if I was hyper aware of my circulatory system. My pulse was up, my oxygen level was down. They allowed me to remove my mask and encouraged me to breathe from my diaphragm. That did the trick for both my pulse and oxygen level. I also had a little bit of spaciness but decided I would not share that with the nurses since they were already concerned about me getting home safely. When they asked, I told them I had driven myself and had no one I could call to drive me home.

I was motivated to get back home before anything further popped up. I figured that if it was my fate to experience a very bad reaction, it would have already happened and now I needed to get home and make myself as comfortable as possible for the duration. Finally, I assured them that I only had to drive 8 miles on surface streets and that I would take the shuttle back to the parking lot from the center rather than walk back. One of the nurses filled out the patient portion of the yellow appointment slip for me at the final checkout and likely added a few of her own notes. I have no doubt that she noticed more than I was able to verbalize. They gave me a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card to fill out and keep. I made it home without any problems.

**COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card**

Please keep this record card, which includes medical information about the vaccines you have received.  
Por favor, guarde esta tarjeta de registro, que incluye información médica sobre las vacunas que ha recibido.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Patient number (medical record or IIS record number) \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccine	Product Name/Manufacturer Lot Number	Date	Healthcare Professional or Clinic Site
1 <sup>st</sup> Dose COVID-19	Janssen (J&J) 1805020	3/11/21 mm dd yy	LLUH
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dose COVID-19		mm dd yy	
Other		mm dd yy	
Other		mm dd yy	

**Reminder! Return for a second dose!**  
**¡Recordatorio! ¡Regrese para la segunda dosis!**

Vaccine	Date / Fecha
COVID-19 vaccine Vacuna contra el COVID-19	mm / dd / yy
Other Otra	mm / dd / yy

Bring this vaccination record to every vaccination or medical visit. Check with your health care provider to make sure you are not missing any doses of routinely recommended vaccines.  
Lleve este registro de vacunación a cada cita médica o de vacunación. Consulte con su proveedor de atención médica para asegurarse de que no le falte ninguna dosis de las vacunas recomendadas.

For more information about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccine, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).  
Para obtener más información sobre el COVID-19 y la vacuna contra el COVID-19, visite [espanol.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

You can report possible adverse reactions following COVID-19 vaccination to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) at [vaers.hhs.gov](https://vaers.hhs.gov).  
Puede notificar las posibles reacciones adversas después de la vacunación contra el COVID-19 al Sistema de Notificación de Reacciones Adversas a las Vacunas (VAERS) en [vaers.hhs.gov](https://vaers.hhs.gov).

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Once home, I changed clothes, had a good lunch, and settled in for whatever was going to happen. I definitely got chills—not the teeth chattering variety—but the kind where you know that if you were normal, and you were underneath as many layers as I was, you would be sweltering. In fact, during the night, I got up and put on a wool hat to complete my ensemble. I also experienced what felt like an extreme tiredness of my eyes. It was as if I had read a 1,000-page book in one sitting or binge watched 10 hours of videos. And the level of ringing in my ears was a bit louder than usual.

The next morning, the chills were receding, my eyes felt much better, my ears were back to normal, and I had transitioned to some fatigue and aching. I took it easy, stayed bundled up on the sofa most of the day, watched DVDs, read, and napped. I think I have weathered the storm and after seeing that incredibly long line for second doses, and also hearing that the second shot of Pfizer or Moderna really hits you hard, I am glad that I don't have to go back for a second shot!

The best information claims that full immunity benefits require two weeks from the date of the vaccination to develop. I am waiting.