

Improving Vaccine Confidence and Acceptance



How to Talk About COVID-19 Vaccines

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Vaccine Preventable Disease Control

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health



Overview

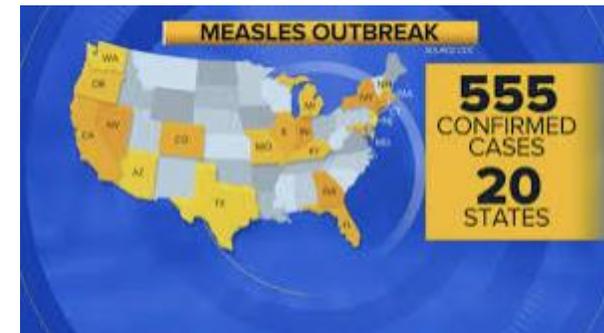
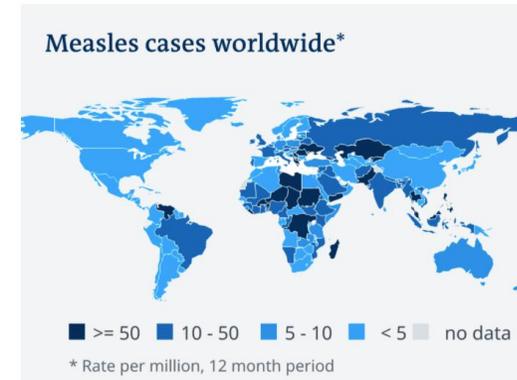
- Vaccine Confidence vs Hesitance
- Vaccine Confidence Issues
- What to Avoid
- 5 Key Components of COVID-19 Vaccine Communication
- Talking Point Resources



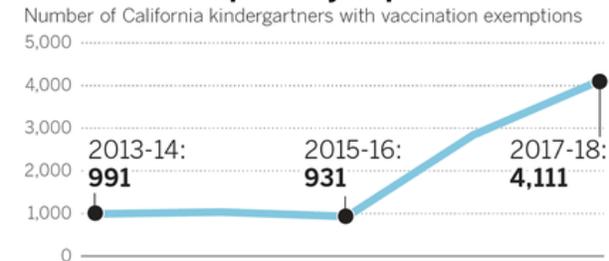
Vaccine Hesitance

A significant issue- world, US, Los Angeles

- Postponing, rejecting, or refusing to get vaccinated
- Results in outbreaks of disease
- The World Health Organization's top 10 threats to global health in 2019 included vaccine hesitancy



Medical exemptions jump statewide



Source: California Department of Public Health @latimesgraphics

Is it Vaccine Confidence, Hesitance or Access?

LOCAL NEWS

Data showing vaccination rates by community reveal inequities in L.A. County, health officials acknowledge

Los Angeles Times



New map shows deep inequities in L.A.'s COVID-19 vaccine rollout

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Los Angeles Times

HEALTH

Local Doctors Say Equitable Access, Not Hesitancy the Main Issue in Vaccine Distribution

OPINION

Op-Ed: Why public health messaging should emphasize vaccine acceptance, not hesitancy

Access

- No access to the internet
- Not in the language spoken
- Difficult to navigate
- Takes time
- No appointments available
- No appointments available at night or after work
- No transportation
- Too far away
- Can't take time off work to get vaccinated
- Cant take time off work if need to stay home from side effect
- Not sure what documentation needed, cost, immigration status





Vaccine Confidence/Hesitance Issues

Distrust

- Distrust as a result from poor treatment by health care system
- Distrust of drug companies, health care
 - public health, or government

Misinformation

- Many sources- social media
- Disease is more “natural” and beneficial than vaccine
- Peer and community pressure (not to be immunized)
- Don’t need it if you’ve had COVID-19

Safety

- How the vaccine was made and tested
- Short term and long-term effects
- Ingredients
- How it works

Too much information

- New vaccines
- Effectiveness
- Eligibility





Vaccine Confidence

Vaccines in General

Accept All. Accept Some. Delay Some. Refuse but Unsure. Refuse All.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Very Confident. Confident. Wait and See. Unsure. No Confidence

- People are taking a wait and see strategy
- Not a refusal, but waiting.
- Many people have questions and concerns about vaccines

MESSAGING ELEMENTS REJECTED ACROSS AUDIENCES

Negativity & Fear

Avoid reminders of how difficult the year has been, as it can invoke a sense of hopelessness

Fear tactics don't generate trust or answer questions about vaccines

Don't judge, coerce, scare or threaten

The Right Thing To Do

References to "many people already stepping up" can come off as pushy or accusatory

Don't use guilt or shame

Overpromising or Obfuscation

Most understand that mass vaccination is a long-term process. Avoid messages that imply vaccine availability will "flip the switch"

Don't over promise

'Back to Normal'

For most post-pandemic life will never be "the way it was"

It's more about getting back to life rather than back to normal

Don't assume it's back to normal for everyone

5 Key Components of COVID-19 Vaccine Communication



- 1) Lead with Empathy, Respect and Support
- 2) Ask, Listen, Acknowledge
- 3) Use Personal Stories – Share Why You Got Vaccinated
- 4) Use Key Messages and Talking Points that are Easy to Understand
- 5) Provide Resources and Be Prepared to Help

Key Component 1: Lead with Empathy, Respect and Support

- Assume people want what's best for themselves, the people they care about and their family and are attempting to make the best decisions.
- People may be more afraid of the COVID-19 vaccine than getting sick with COVID-19
- Assume people may have experienced loss- illness, finances, or death of someone
- They may not be ready to accept a recommendation to get vaccinated
- They may need help to find a vaccine or get an appointment



Key Component 2: Ask, Listen and Acknowledge

Ask

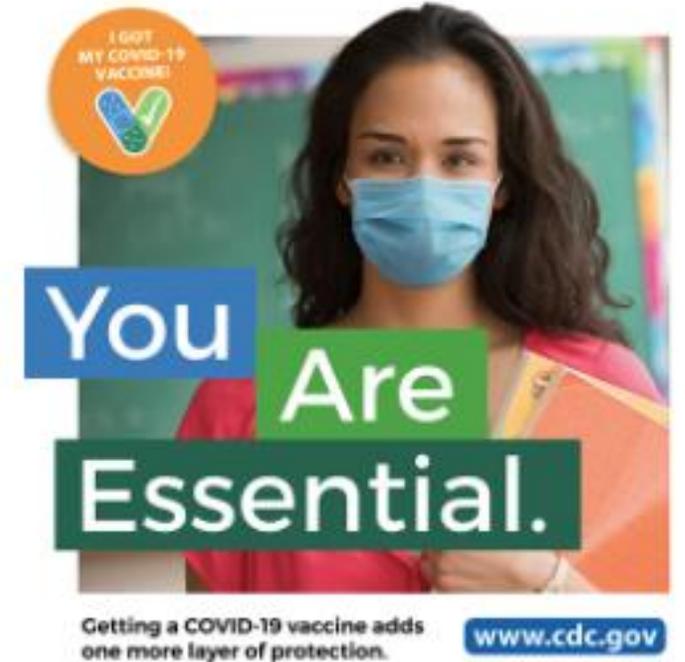
- Ask what questions and concerns they have
- Ask open-ended questions (let them answer)

Listen

- Let them express their concerns
- Take note of beliefs, fears and other factors impacting confidence

Acknowledge

- Restate and summarize their concerns – “It sounds like you...”
- Acknowledge it can be an emotional or a difficult decision and that the choice is theirs
- If people decline, respect their decision and offer to answer questions
- Over time, if possible, check-in on their decision



MESSAGING ELEMENTS THAT RESONATE ACROSS AUDIENCES

Acknowledge Concerns

Acknowledge people's
hesitancy rather than
challenge it

Provide the promise of
scientific unbiased
answers

Moments Missed

Highlighting moments of
human connection missed
serve as a powerful
reminder that vaccination
is a pathway to regaining
these moments

Protection

Emphasis on protecting
myself, loved ones and
those most vulnerable.

Positive Tone

Inviting & respectful as
opposed to demanding

Acknowledge that the
choice is yours to make,
which ties to deeply
rooted American values of
liberty and freedom

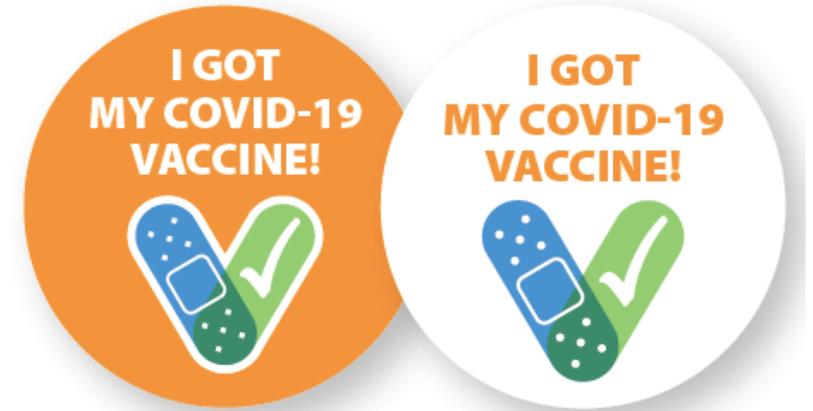
Being acknowledged
instead of challenged

Wanting to return to
everyday activities

The desire to keep self,
loved ones and community safe

Deciding for one's
self

Key Component 3: Use Personal Stories and Share Why You Got Vaccinated



- I got vaccinated because I want to see my parents
- I got vaccinated so I could feel safer at work and when I go out
- When I got vaccinated, I had a few side effects, but I understand that was my body creating a defense against COVID-19
- For me, vaccination against COVID-19 is about my health, but also about protecting people around me
- I asked my doctor, who I trust, and I believe the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, was tested and no short cuts were taken
- I was afraid of side effects, but they were mild and now I am so relieved knowing I am protected

Key Component 4: Use Key Messages and Talking Points (non-technical terms) to discuss the COVID-19 Vaccine

- Is the vaccine safe?
- How was it made?
- Why should I get vaccinated against COVID-19?
- What should I expect (side effects)?

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
COVID-19 Vaccines

There are many vaccines in development to protect us against COVID-19. Below are some common questions about vaccination and COVID-19 vaccines.

- 1. Why is vaccination important?**
Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent disease. Vaccines save millions of lives each year. When we get vaccinated, we aren't just protecting ourselves, but also those around us.
- 2. How do vaccines protect communities?**
When a person gets vaccinated, they are less likely to get a disease or pass the germ on to other people. When more people get vaccinated there are fewer people left for a germ to infect so it is harder for the germ to spread. This is called community immunity or "herd immunity." Herd immunity is important because it protects people who can't get the vaccine, for example, because they are too young or are very sick.
- 3. How does a vaccine work?**
Vaccines work by preparing the body's immune system to recognize and fight off germs. They reduce your risk of getting a disease by working with your body's natural defenses to build protection. When you get a vaccine, your immune system responds. It:
 - Detects the invading germ, such as a virus or bacteria.
 - Makes antibodies. Antibodies are proteins produced naturally by the immune system to fight disease.
 - Remembers the disease and how to fight it. If you are exposed to the germ after getting the vaccine, your immune system can quickly destroy it before you become sick.
 Our immune systems are designed to remember. After we get one or more doses of a vaccine, we are protected against the disease for a period of time. This is what makes vaccines so effective. Instead of treating a disease after it happens, vaccines can prevent us from getting sick in the first place.
- 4. Can you get COVID-19 from a vaccine?**
No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines being developed in the United States have the virus that causes COVID-19 in them. Sometimes people get a fever or feel tired for a day or so after getting a vaccine. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity. You can learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work at this [CDC website](#).
It usually takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. If a person got infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after they got a shot they could still get COVID-19. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.
- 5. Will getting the vaccine cause me to test positive on a COVID-19 test?**
No. Vaccines won't cause you to test positive on a viral test (like the swab test) that looks for current COVID-19 infection. You may test positive on some antibody tests. This is because one of the ways that vaccines work is to teach your body to make antibodies.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov
12/12/20 FAQ Vaccine (English)



Myths about COVID-19 Vaccines
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Myth 1: The vaccine was developed too fast – I don't think they know enough about it.
The Fact: These vaccines could be made fast and still be safe for three simple reasons:

- There was a lot of research done on the kind of virus that causes COVID-19 before the virus showed up. Scientists had a big head start about the kind of vaccine that would work best to fight the virus.
- A lot of government money was spent on other vaccine companies to work on this vaccine and to put all of their scientists to work on it around the clock. They helped speed everything up.
- While every step that has to be followed to make a new vaccine and be sure it is safe was followed, some of the steps were done at the same time instead of one after another. It is like cooking several parts of a meal at once instead of cooking one course at a time. You get done sooner but it's just as good.

 In fact, the two vaccines that have been approved so far are called COVID-19. They are made on more than 70,000 volunteers, including adults of all ages and different racial and ethnic groups, and were found to work very well and be equally safe for all.

Myth 2: Only 1% of people who get COVID-19 die of it. Won't the vaccine kill more people than that?
The Fact: COVID-19 is a lethal disease. Seasonal flu can be very dangerous but it kills about one person in every thousand. Instead, while COVID-19 kills one out of a hundred people who are infected, no one has died from the two approved vaccines.

- Some people wonder if they could be just because volunteers who had part in vaccine trials were not watched for long enough for us to know if there will be deaths. In fact, the volunteers were watched for long enough for us to know if there will be deaths. In fact, the volunteers who got the vaccine were watched for long enough for us to know if there will be deaths. In fact, the volunteers who got the vaccine were watched for long enough for us to know if there will be deaths.

Myth 3: The vaccine can make you sick with COVID-19.
The Fact: The current vaccines don't include the virus in any form – no live virus, no weakened virus, no dead virus. You just cannot get the disease from the vaccine.

- Some other vaccines use the virus that is fighting. In some cases, you have no change up on immune response. The current COVID-19 vaccines do not work that way so there is no way that they could give you COVID-19.
- It is possible to catch the disease in the few days after your vaccination before the vaccine has a chance to work, but that would not mean you got sick from the vaccine. For most people, the vaccine needs 7 days before it starts to work. And both those vaccines require a second dose before a person is fully protected from getting sick from the virus.

 It is easy to be confused about this, because you might feel some side effects for a while after getting the vaccine. In fact, about half of the volunteers who used these vaccines experienced some side effects more of these effects were mild and did not require any treatment or change in daily activity and lasted for 1-2 days. When they were feeling, was not COVID-19, however, not even a mild case of COVID-19. They were feeling the symptoms of an

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov
12/12/20 COVID-19 Vaccine (English)



NATIONAL FORUM ON COVID-19 VACCINE
Communicating About COVID-19 Vaccine Safety and Risk

Most people in the United States are planning to get a COVID-19 vaccine. However, some may want more information, including information about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. Take the time to listen to people's concerns and answer their questions. This can help them become confident in their decision to get vaccinated. [Open guidance](#) in the vaccine with communities leads to more vaccinations, which in turn lead to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Remember: if a person has concerns or questions, this doesn't necessarily mean they won't accept a COVID-19 vaccine. Sometimes people simply want your assistance to their questions.

Consider principles from [Data and Community Risk Communication](#) when communicating about COVID-19 vaccine safety:

- Be first. Share information and what is known, what is not known, and what is being done to fill in the gaps as quickly as possible.
- Be right. Check the information that you share is accurate in order to establish credibility.
- Be credible. Communicate honestly, timely, and scientific evidence so the public can trust your information and guidance.
- Express empathy. Acknowledge what people are feeling and consider their perspectives when providing recommendations.
- Promote action. Keep action messages simple, short, and easy to remember.
- Show respect. Actively listen to the issues and solutions brought up by local communities and leaders.

 When communicating about COVID-19 vaccine safety and risk, be sure to emphasize:

- COVID-19 vaccines are [safe and effective](#).
- Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines, and those vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.
- COVID-19 vaccines meet all [safety standards](#).
- The [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) carefully reviews all safety data from clinical trials and authorizes emergency vaccine use only when the expected benefits outweigh potential risks.
- The [Substance Use Monitoring and Evaluation Division \(SUD\)](#), a group of immunization and public health experts, reviews all safety data before recommending any COVID-19 vaccine for use in the United States.

Additional CDC Resources and References

Education for Patients

- [COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [How to get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [What to expect when you get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [How to get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [How to get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [How to get a COVID-19 vaccine](#)

Tools for Providers

- [COVID-19 vaccine information sheet](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/CovidVaccineForum

Key Component 5: Offer resources & be prepared to help someone find a vaccination or make an appointment

- If people decline, respect their decision and offer to answer questions
- Let them know they can come back to talk to you
- Over time, if possible, check-in and reoffer the vaccine
- Offer support to find or make an appointment

[VaccinateLACounty.com](https://www.vaccinatelacounty.com)

Information Updated as of 4-26-21
Check [VaccinateLACounty.com](https://www.vaccinatelacounty.com) for
most recent information



Talking Points

Why should I get vaccinated against COVID-19?

- We need a COVID-19 vaccine because wearing masks and social distancing are not 100% or enough to stop the pandemic.
- Getting vaccinated against COVID 19 is a safe, effective and critical tool to protect us.
- The more people who get vaccinated against COVID-19, the fewer chances the virus has to make people seriously sick or cause death.
- When you get vaccinated against COVID-19, you help protect yourself, your family, your patients, your co-workers and the community you live in.



Talking Points

- There are currently three vaccines available in Los Angeles County- Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson and Johnson (Janssen)
- All three vaccines have been tested and are safe and effective.
- **All three vaccines are effective at preventing serious illness hospitalization and death from COVID-19 disease.**
- You can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine



Talking Points

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

- Because of the pandemic, COVID-19 vaccines were made as quickly as possible, but **all** the safety steps were followed. No steps or testing have been skipped.
- Thousands of people, including many Latinos, African Americans, men and women of many ages, and others who have health conditions, took the COVID-19 vaccine to make sure it was safe.
- More than 140 million people in the US have safely received COVID-19 vaccines.
- There is a U.S. vaccine safety system that works to make sure the COVID-19 vaccine is safe before and now tracks any serious side effects
- It is much safer to get vaccinated against COVID-19 than to get sick with COVID-19. The protection you get from being sick with COVID-19 isn't better than the vaccine.



Talking Points

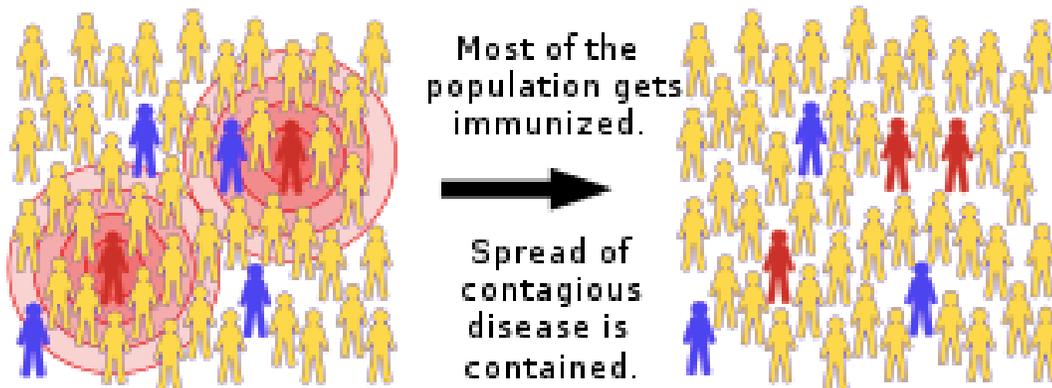
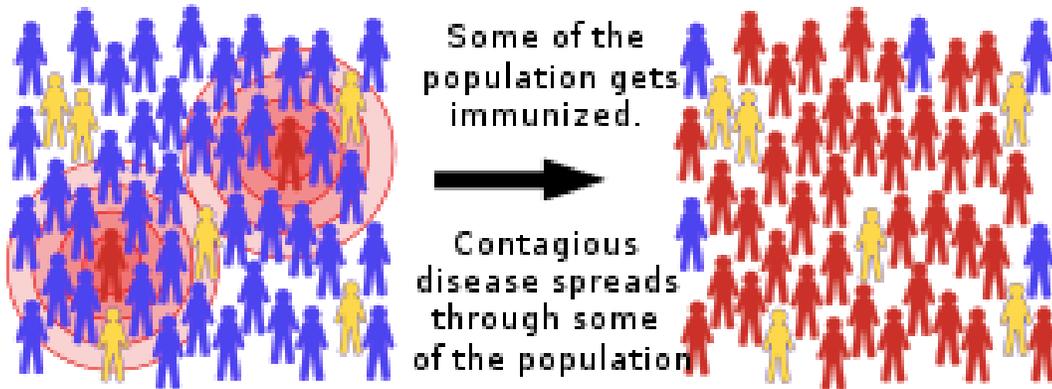
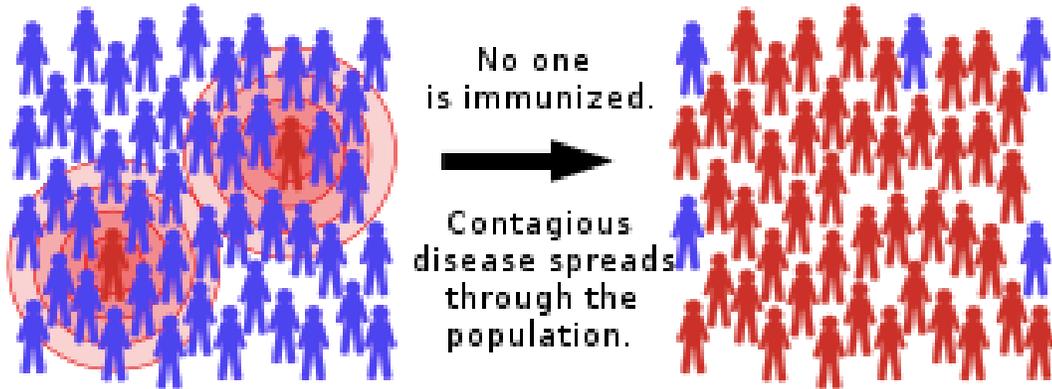
Does the COVID-19 vaccine work?

- The COVID-19 vaccine will safely make your body ready to fight and defend you from COVID-19 virus if you are exposed.
- COVID-19 vaccine works by teaching our bodies how to fight the virus that causes COVID-19.
- It takes a few weeks after your vaccine for the body to be ready to defend you from the virus if you are exposed.
- Until enough people get vaccinated against COVID-19, you must keep wearing your mask and keeping social distance to stay protected from the virus.

Community Immunity

- When you get vaccinated, you protect
- Yourself
- Your family
- Your community

 = not immunized, but still healthy  = immunized and healthy  = not immunized, sick, and contagious



Continue to take steps to stop the spread

- Wear a face covering
- Avoid close contact and crowded spaces
- Wash your hands often
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces



After You Have Been Fully Vaccinated

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine



- You can visit indoors with other fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask or physically distancing.



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