

QUESTION & ANSWER BRIEF

BACKGROUND

The [Ad Council](#) and the [COVID Collaborative](#) are leading a massive communications effort to educate the American public and build confidence around COVID-19 vaccines.

Guided by the leading minds in health and medicine and fueled by the best talent in the private sector, the COVID-19 Vaccine Education Initiative is designed to reach different audiences, including communities of color who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

AUDIENCE GOAL¹

- Reduce vaccine hesitancy by empowering people to get the answers they need, overcome myths and misinformation, and make an informed decision to protect themselves and their loved ones.
- Various surveys and research reveal that many Americans report they will not get the vaccine or have questions before they feel confident and informed.

GENERAL ROOTS OF HESITANCY²

- Concerns about **safety and side effects** from COVID-19 vaccination, driven by the speed of the clinical development process and the vaccines' novelty
- Lack of knowledge
- **Distrust** in the **political and economic motives** of the government and corporations

CREATIVE GUIDANCE

- Lead with empathy and respect that people have real questions or concerns.
- Position vaccines as a way to help people protect themselves and their loved ones.
- Respect people's independence and urge them to make an informed decision.
- Gain trust by being honest and transparent where appropriate.
- Pair the rational information with the emotional side of the moments we all miss.
- Welcome people's questions, and point them to the latest clear information.
- In visuals and photography, balance the "moments we miss" with showing realistic scenarios. Masks and protective measures will still be needed as vaccines roll out.

¹National survey conducted via IPSOS; December 14-21, 2020 | n=1,992 adults 18+

²Qualitative interviews conducted via Ahuzl Research; December 8-18, 2020 | n=8 adults 25-60

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CREATIVE PLATFORM

It's Up to You is a simple idea that can inspire brilliant executions. It's a framework that allows for independent, yet integrated communications efforts. We believe that uniting under this open-source creative concept will strengthen the key communications message and inspire people to learn more about COVID-19 vaccines.



- CTA: Get the latest information so you can make an informed decision.
- URL: [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://www.getvaccineanswers.org)
- Platform engages with current mindset, highlights social connections, and gives people a personal choice to make an informed decision.

TRUSTED MESSENGERS³

- **Medical experts and community health providers** are generally the most trusted sources. A call to action to "get vaccinated" is best to only come from these sources.
- **Word of mouth** is important to build a cultural consensus, but people don't necessarily trust their **friends and family** when it comes to the facts of COVID-19 vaccination.
- **Celebrities** shouldn't generally be spokespeople for medical facts, but they can give a platform to experts to help share educational information (or talk about their own questions and learning).
- **Institutions** like CDC still carry credibility, but it may be best to focus on trusted experts rather than institutions. Faith in government and the pharmaceutical industry is low.

³National survey conducted via IPSOS; December 15-21, 2020 | n=1,038; vaccine hesitant adults

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QUESTIONS OVERVIEW

People want clear, transparent answers without having to search various sources. Language should be concise, straightforward, and plain. Be clear that you are providing the latest information – and don't overstate anything that is not yet known.

4 TOP FACTS TO KNOW

1. Getting immunized against COVID-19 will protect most people from getting sick or becoming seriously ill.
2. Authorized vaccines are undergoing the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.
3. Protecting yourself also helps protect people around you who are at higher risk or have weakened immune systems.
4. COVID-19 vaccines are being provided free of charge to all people living in the United States.

These questions (which are among the most asked and/or were recommended by public health agencies) will be featured on the Ad Council's initiative site and updated frequently.

WHY SHOULD I GET VACCINATED?

General Answer:

- Getting immunized against COVID-19 will protect most people from getting sick or becoming seriously ill.
- Protecting yourself also helps protect the people around you, including those at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 or those who can't get vaccinated — like infants and children, or people with weakened immune systems.
- Vaccination is especially important for people with certain underlying medical conditions, like diabetes and high blood pressure, because they are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Current data suggest that COVID-19 vaccines used in the United States should work against COVID-19 variants.

Common Related Qs:

- When can I get vaccinated?
- What type of vaccine will I get?
- How many people in the U.S. have been vaccinated?

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HOW DO COVID-19 VACCINES PROTECT US?

General Answer:

- When we get a vaccine, it activates our immune response. This helps our bodies learn to fight off the virus without the danger of an actual infection. If we are exposed to the virus in the future, our immune system “remembers” how to fight it.

Common Related Qs:

- Why should I get the vaccine?
- Should I get vaccinated if I've already had COVID-19?
- How long does protection from the COVID-19 vaccine last?

HOW ARE VACCINES TESTED BEFORE I GET THEM?

General Answer:

- Vaccines are held to very high safety standards. The FDA requires all vaccines to go through rigorous testing and inspection to ensure they meet safety standards.
- After a vaccine is authorized by the FDA and made available to the public, experts continue to closely monitor the vaccines for ongoing safety and to help us learn more about questions like how long vaccines will provide protection.
- Researchers also made sure that the trials included adults of diverse backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and underlying conditions.

Common Related Qs:

- How are vaccines tested for safety?
- How were these vaccines made so quickly?
- Did the clinical trials include people like me?

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WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT GETTING A VACCINE?

General Answer:

- It's normal to experience some discomfort after getting a vaccine. This actually means it's working and that your body is creating a protective immune response – without the danger of getting COVID-19 or an actual infection.
- Your body takes time to build immunity. You may not be fully protected against COVID-19 until 1-2 weeks after your second shot.
- The COVID-19 vaccines are free to anyone living in the US, regardless of US citizenship status.
- Vaccines.gov is the most up to date national database of locations that offer COVID-19 vaccines. There are also resources like PlanYourVaccine.com to help you determine your eligibility.

Common Related Qs:

- How will I feel afterwards?
- Are there any side effects?
- Could I have an allergic reaction?