



NACHC COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT FOR HEALTH CENTER STAFF

February 2021

INTRODUCTION

Serving more than 30 million Americans, community health centers play a unique and critically important role in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Health centers are urgently encouraging vaccinating their own staff and patients in communities across the United States.

Getting the COVID-19 vaccine and recommending others get it may be challenging for health center staff. They may feel anxious about the safety of the vaccine, and they may experience concern or skepticism from others when recommending the vaccine.

This Toolkit is intended to provide health center staff with simple Key Messages (which can be tailored for use with specific populations); Frequently Asked Questions; Sample Social Media posts; and useful template communications materials to create confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine and encourage health center staff and the communities they serve to get the vaccine and help protect against COVID-19.

COVID-19 VACCINATION KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTH CENTER STAFF TO USE IN COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS

EVERYONE SHOULD GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19

- You can choose to protect yourself and your community from getting COVID-19 by getting the vaccine.
- If you still get infected after you get vaccinated, the vaccine may prevent the illness from becoming more serious.
- Choosing to get vaccinated helps keep you, your family, and your community safe, secure, and protected.

AS A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT I GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19

- Community health centers play a unique and critically important role in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- We are all in this together. Building defense against COVID-19 in our health center and our community is a team effort.
- <Insert name of your health center> is committed to the safety, security, and protection of our community. We have already vaccinated <insert number> in our community.
- By getting the vaccine myself, I am supporting the health of my family and my community.

THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE

- The COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people of all races and ethnicities to make sure they met safety standards. In fact, several health centers participated in the clinical trials.
- There were no serious safety concerns.
- Although the vaccine development process was accelerated, no shortcuts were taken to verify its safety.
- The vaccine's side effects are an indication that it's working.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will keep monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues now that they are in use.

THE COVID-19 VACCINE CAN EFFECTIVELY PROTECT YOU AND OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY FROM THE VIRUS

- Testing determined that the COVID-19 vaccines are effective in protecting adults of different races, ethnicities, and ages.
- You can help protect others in your community by getting a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Your primary care doctor or the health center in your community are the best sources of information about the vaccine.
- You and your community are in this together. The more people who get the vaccine, the less likely the virus is to spread in your community.

SOURCES:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/healthcare-professionals-vaccine-quick-answers.pdf>

<https://www.debeaumont.org/covid-vaccine-poll/>

<https://reaganudall.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/Vaccine%20Confidence%20Project%20Findings%20for%20Public%20Distribution%20121820.pdf>

COVID-19 VACCINATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FOR HEALTH CENTER STAFF TO USE IN COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS

1. Should I get vaccinated for COVID-19?

We strongly recommend you get vaccinated. The vaccine will help protect you from getting COVID-19. If you still get infected after you get vaccinated, the vaccine may prevent serious illness. The COVID-19 vaccine may also help protect others in your community from getting or dying from the virus.

2. If I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes. CDC recommends that you get vaccinated even if you have already had COVID-19, because you can be diagnosed more than once. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection will last.

3. Can my child get vaccinated for COVID-19?

No. More studies need to be conducted before COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for children younger than age 16.

4. Is it safe to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for people with underlying health problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity. People with these conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

5. Is it better to get natural immunity to COVID-19 rather than immunity from a vaccine?

No. While you may have some short-term antibody protection after recovering from COVID-19, we don't know how long this protection lasts. Vaccination is the best protection, and it is safe. People who get COVID-19 can have serious illnesses, and some have debilitating symptoms that persist for months.

6. What are the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 can cause severe medical complications and lead to death in some people. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. If you get COVID-19, you could spread the disease to family, friends, and others in your community. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you by creating an antibody response in your body without your having to become sick with COVID-19. A COVID-19 vaccine might prevent you from getting COVID-19. Or, if you get COVID-19, the vaccine might keep you from becoming seriously ill or from developing serious complications. Getting vaccinated also might help protect your community from COVID-19, particularly people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

7. Why do I need two COVID-19 shots?

Currently authorized vaccines, and most vaccines under development, require two doses of vaccine. The first shot helps the immune system recognize the virus, and the second shot – given at least three weeks later – strengthens the immune response. You need both to get the best protection.

8. Will the shot hurt or make me sick?

There may be side effects, but they should go away within a few days. Possible side effects include a sore arm, headache, fever, or body aches. This does not mean you have COVID-19. Side effects are signs that the vaccine is working to build immunity. If they don't go away in a week, or you have more serious symptoms, call your doctor.

9. Can the vaccine give me COVID-19?

No. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use or in development in the United States use the live virus that causes COVID-19. However, it typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick.

10. Are there long-term side effects from COVID-19 vaccine?

Because all COVID-19 vaccines are new, it will take more time and more people getting vaccinated to learn about very rare or possible long-term side effects. The good news is, at least 8 weeks' worth of safety data were gathered in the clinical trials for all the authorized vaccines, and it's unusual for vaccine side effects to appear more than 8 weeks after vaccination.

11. How do I know if COVID-19 vaccine is safe?

All COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. There were no serious safety concerns. The CDC and the FDA will keep monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues now that they are in use.

12. Was the COVID-19 vaccine tested among communities of color?

Yes. The COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people of all races and ethnicities to make sure they met safety standards. Testing determined that the COVID-19 vaccines are effective in protecting adults of different races, ethnicities, and ages from the virus.

13. How do I report problems or bad reactions after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

Your primary care doctor will provide medical care and follow up if you have problems or a bad reaction after getting the vaccine. If you have a problem or reaction, please report it to your clinical provider. The provider is required to report adverse events to the CDC VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System). Additionally, all recipients who receive the vaccine can enroll in v-safe. This is a smartphone tool you can use to tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine. If you report serious side effects, someone from CDC will call to follow up.

SOURCES:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/healthcare-professionals-vaccine-quick-answers.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/facts-covid-vaccines-english-508.pdf>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484859>

COVID-19 VACCINATION SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FOR USE BY HEALTH CENTER STAFF

NACHC has created graphics to use with these social media posts. Visit our [COVID Social Media Toolkit](#)

KEY MESSAGE: COVID-19 VACCINES ARE AN IMPORTANT TOOL TO HELP STOP THE PANDEMIC

FACEBOOK POST

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will not only protect you but help stop the spread of the pandemic. While no one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic, getting vaccinated is a critical step. Your best protection from COVID-19 will be a combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. No one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic. Learn about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/about-vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>

INSTAGRAM POST

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will not only protect you but help stop the spread of the pandemic. While no one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic, getting vaccinated is a critical step. Your best protection from #COVID19 will be a combination of getting a COVID-19 #vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. No one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic. Learn about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines)

TWITTER POST

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will not only protect you but help stop the spread of the pandemic. A combination of getting a COVID-19 #vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, and washing your hands often are all needed. Learn more: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/about-vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>

KEY MESSAGE: COVID-19 VACCINES WILL NOT GIVE YOU COVID-19

FACEBOOK POST

The vaccine will not give you COVID-19. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States uses the live virus that causes COVID-19. You may have symptoms like a fever after you get a vaccine. This is not uncommon and a sign that your immune system is learning how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about the facts behind COVID-19 vaccines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/about-vaccines/vaccine-myths.html>

INSTAGRAM POST

The vaccine will not give you COVID-19. None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States uses the live virus that causes COVID-19. You may have symptoms like a fever after you get a #vaccine. This is not uncommon and a sign that your immune system is learning how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about the facts behind COVID-19 vaccines: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

TWITTER POST

The vaccine will not give you COVID-19. None of the vaccines currently available in the United States uses the live virus that causes COVID-19. You may have symptoms like a fever after you get a vaccine. This is not uncommon. Learn more #vaccine facts: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/about-vaccines/vaccine-myths.html>

SOURCE:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/health-systems-communication-toolkit.html#social>

COVID-19 VACCINATION TEMPLATE COMMUNICATION MATERIALS FOR USE BY HEALTH CENTER STAFF

PRESS RELEASE

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY BY GETTING A COVID-19 VACCINE

<Insert name of Community Health Center> is offering COVID-19 vaccines on <insert date and time> at <insert address of facility>.

<Insert City><Insert Date> - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and protect your family and community. You can get vaccinated free of charge on <insert date and time> at <insert name of Community Health Center>.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will not only protect you but help stop the spread of the pandemic. While no one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic, getting vaccinated is a critical step. Your best protection from COVID-19 will be a combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. Make sure to get vaccinated! #ThisIsOurShot.

"I have gotten my COVID-19 vaccine," said <insert name of senior official at Community Health Center>. "Building defense against COVID-19 in our health center and our community is a team effort. By getting the vaccine, I am supporting the health of my family and my community."

The CDC and medical experts agree the COVID-19 vaccine is safe. All COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. There were

no serious safety concerns. The CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will keep monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues now that they are in use.

None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States uses the live virus that causes COVID-19. You may have symptoms like a fever after you get a vaccine. This is not uncommon and a sign that your immune system is learning how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19.

For more information, or to schedule your vaccine, go to <insert Community Health Center website> or call <insert Community Health Center phone number>.

30 SECOND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (FOR RADIO OR TV)

Protect yourself and your family by getting a COVID-19 Vaccine. <Insert name of Community Health Center> is offering COVID-19 vaccines on <insert date and time> at <insert address of facility>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and protect you and your family.

Your best protection from COVID-19 is a combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. No one tool alone is going to stop the virus. Getting the vaccine will keep you and your family safe.

For more information, or to schedule your vaccine, go to <insert Community Health Center website> or call <insert Community Health Center phone number>.

VACCINE CLINIC INVITATIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

INVITATION FOR FACEBOOK

Protect yourself and your family by getting a COVID-19 Vaccine. <Insert name of Community Health Center> is offering COVID-19 vaccines on <insert date and time> at <insert address of facility>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and protect you and your family.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will not only protect you but help stop the spread of the pandemic. While no one tool alone is going to stop the pandemic, getting vaccinated is a critical step. Your best protection from COVID-19 will be a combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. Make sure to get vaccinated! #ThisIsOurShot.

For more information, or to schedule your vaccine, go to <insert Community Health Center website> or call <insert Community Health Center phone number>.

INVITATION FOR INSTAGRAM

Protect yourself and your family by getting a COVID-19 Vaccine. <Insert name of Community Health Center> is offering COVID-19 vaccines on <insert date and time> at <insert address of facility>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and protect you and your family.

For more information, or to schedule your vaccine, go to <insert Community Health Center website> or call <insert Community Health Center phone number>.

INVITATION FOR TWITTER

The @CDCgov strongly recommend getting the #COVID-19vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and protect you and your family. For more information, or to schedule your #vaccine, go to <insert Community Health Center website> or call <insert Community Health Center phone number>.

WAITING ROOM POSTERS AND “SELFIE” SIGNS FOR POSTING IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Health centers can print the posters to encourage staff to get vaccinated. Health centers can also use the selfie signs people hold up and post on social media channels. You can download the materials here (available in English and Spanish): [Bit.ly/CovidResponseCHC](https://bit.ly/CovidResponseCHC). Please be sure to tag NACHC in your posts.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CDC: [COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit for Medical Centers, Pharmacies, and Clinicians](#)

CDC: [Making a Strong Recommendation for COVID-19 Vaccination: Engaging in Effective COVID-19 Vaccine Conversations](#)

CDC: [Quick Answers for Healthcare Professionals to Common Questions People May Ask About COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

CDC: [COVID-19 Vaccine: What to Expect](#)

CDC: [Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

Mayo Clinic: [COVID-19 Vaccines: Get the Facts](#)

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