

COVID-19 Vaccines

Talking Points for Community Leaders

The below information can be used by community leaders to provide accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and vaccination in your community. You may wish to translate these messages into languages most appropriate for your community for use during one-on-one conversations or speaking events or to create printable materials, video materials, or social media posts. Thank you for your work to help Ohio's vaccination team reach as many Ohioans as possible.

- Communities of color face the risk of greater rates of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths than white communities due to health disparities and various social factors, such as transportation, housing, or food challenges. That's why it is important for minority communities to protect themselves from the virus, and to consider being vaccinated when their turn comes.
- It is important to continue to practice safety precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Wash your hands frequently, maintain 6 feet of distance from those around you, and wear a clean mask every day that covers your mouth and nose. This will reduce your chance of being exposed to or spreading the virus that causes the disease.
- We are excited that there are now vaccines available that will eventually provide protection to our entire community from COVID-19.
- The vaccines are [safe and effective](#). They were tested on a diverse group of people, including a large number of people from communities of color.
- Lots of people want to know how COVID-19 vaccines were created so quickly.
 - Many different private companies and government partners collaborated to work all at once on different parts of the vaccine development processes. These processes included several steps that are similar to those used to develop earlier vaccines, such as the flu or chicken pox vaccine. For vaccines developed in the past, the processes were done one after another, and not all at once, so it took longer.
 - In addition, governments sped up some other processes to help us have COVID-19 vaccines quickly.
 - Finally, the virus that causes COVID-19 is from a family of viruses referred to as coronaviruses. Work had already been started on a vaccine for other coronaviruses, so years of research laid the groundwork for development of COVID-19 vaccines. They teach our bodies how to create antibodies to destroy the virus.
- Right now, in Ohio and across the country, there is a limited amount of vaccine available. Governor Mike DeWine is working to direct the available vaccine to the people most at risk of death from COVID-19 and to staff of K-12 schools, so our children can receive in-person education. As more vaccine becomes available, COVID-19 vaccines will be provided to all adults who choose to be vaccinated.

- Important things to know are:
 - Two vaccines are currently available. You must be at least 16 years old to take one, and at least 18 years old to take the other.
 - The vaccines have no out-of-pocket cost.
 - You may be asked to verify your name and date of birth, but there are no requirements to get vaccines related to your residency, immigration, or citizenship status.
 - These vaccines are safe and they work. By getting vaccinated, you are protecting yourself, and helping your community on the road back.
- You should continue to wear a mask and practice 6-foot social distancing – **before and after** being vaccinated. The vaccines should protect anyone who gets it from becoming sick with COVID-19. But we don't yet know if people who are vaccinated can still carry the virus and spread it to others.
- There is a lot of misinformation out there about the vaccines. Please use a trusted source for your information or talk to your healthcare provider to get the facts. You can visit coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine or [INSERT your organization's information here].
- Always remember that your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call Ohio's COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.

Created Jan. 25, 2021.