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Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life

HOW TO TALK ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

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COVID-19 vaccinations are a major tool to help us return to normal. There is a lot of information out there about the COVID-19 vaccines—and many people you know may have questions or concerns, or lack accurate information about the vaccines. You can play a key role in helping those close to you navigate this topic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides the following [guidance](#) for how to talk with friends and family about COVID-19 vaccines.

Listen to Their Questions With Empathy

COVID-19 vaccines are new, and it's normal for people to have questions about them. The sheer amount of information—and misinformation—about COVID-19 vaccines can be overwhelming to anyone. You can help by listening without judgment and identifying the root of their concerns.

Acknowledge their emotions so they know they have been heard. For example, you can say, "It sounds like you are stressed at work and home, and concerns about the vaccine are another source of stress. That's really tough."

Ask Open-ended Questions to Explore Their Concerns

Open-ended questions are meant to elicit more than a yes-or-no answer. Asking open-ended questions can help you understand what your friend or family member is worried about, where they learned any troubling

information and what they have done to get answers to their questions. For example, you can ask, "How did watching that news report make you feel? What did you do next?" Try not to sound judgmental, and ask questions that help you understand their concerns. For example, avoid things like, "That's a silly concern," or "Why would you be worried about that?"

Ask Permission to Share Information

Once you understand your friend or family member's question or concern, ask if you can provide some information, and tell them where you get information you trust. If they agree, they will be more willing to listen to you instead of feeling like you're pushing unwanted information on them. You can find answers to common questions from reputable sources, including the CDC or local health department websites, or other trusted sources such as a doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Sometimes, sharing quick, accurate answers to common concerns your family or friends might have can go a long way toward moving someone from worry to confidence. If you don't know the answer to their questions, consider offering to help look for information.



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Help Them Find Their Own Reason to Get Vaccinated

Everyone who chooses to get vaccinated does it for a reason—to protect their family, to protect their children, to be less anxious, to visit their parents or to get back to activities like seeing friends, resuming work or returning to school. After addressing concerns with empathy and facts, you can steer the conversation from “why not” to the important reasons that matter to them—their “why.” You may choose to share your reasons for getting vaccinated or discuss common goals you may have, like visiting with others safely. The reasons that someone may choose to get vaccinated will always be those that are most compelling to them personally.

Help Make Their Vaccination Happen

Once someone decides on their “why,” help them make a commitment to get vaccinated. Help make the path to vaccination shorter, easier and less stressful for them. Offer to help your family member or friend make a vaccination appointment at a location nearby, and, if needed, go with them to the appointment. Offer to help with transportation or to babysit if they need child care.

Remember, every person who chooses to get vaccinated brings us all a step closer to moving past the COVID-19 pandemic. As a trusted messenger to your family and friends, you can play a role in their decision to vaccinate.

To Learn More

The CDC updates its [website](#) regularly with new COVID-19 vaccine information and provides information about vaccine availability. For more specific health guidance, speak with your doctor.

Source: CDC