Healthcare Providers, Your Patients Need to Hear from You!

You are the most trusted resource for your patients in making health decisions. ***Your strong recommendation to get a COVID-19 vaccine is one of the most important factors in your patients' decision to accept vaccination.***

Making a Strong Recommendation to Get a COVID-19 Vaccine

- Patients consistently rank healthcare providers as their most trusted source of vaccine information. Your strong recommendation to get a COVID-19 vaccine is critical for vaccine acceptance.
- Make it clear to your patients that you recommend COVID-19 vaccination for them.
- Tell your patients how important COVID-19 vaccines are to protect their health, as well as the health of their family and friends.
- COVID-19 vaccines are new, and it's understandable that your patients may have questions. Your answers can help them make an informed decision about getting vaccinated.
- Make it clear that you understand they may have questions, and you want to answer them, so they feel confident in choosing to get vaccinated.

How to talk to your patients about COVID-19 vaccination

Key Points to Communicate to Your Patients:

About COVID-19 Vaccines:
1. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.
2. Everyone aged 12 years and older is now eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccination.
3. There are several places to find a COVID-19 vaccine.
4. You may have side effects after vaccination, but these are normal.
5. It typically takes 2 weeks after vaccination for the body to build protection (immunity) against the virus that causes COVID-19. You are not fully vaccinated until 2 weeks after the 2nd dose of a two-dose vaccine or 2 weeks after a one-dose vaccine.
6. People who have been fully vaccinated can start to do some things that they had stopped doing because of the pandemic.

Answering Patients' Questions

Why Get a COVID-19 Vaccine:
There are many reasons to get vaccinated, including protecting your health and getting back to the moments we miss.

Benefits of Getting Vaccinated

- COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccination is a safe way to help build protection.
- COVID-19 vaccination is an important tool to help us get back to the moments we miss.

When You've Been Fully Vaccinated
Once you are fully vaccinated, you can start doing more, like:

- Gathering indoors with other fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask or staying 6 feet apart.
- Participating in activities outdoors without wearing a mask except in certain crowded settings and venues.

Also, fully vaccinated people who travel within the United States don't need to get tested before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel.

Take Action:

Proactive Patient Outreach: Send messages and reminders through your patient communication channels. If your facility does not offer COVID-19 vaccinations, share resources where patients can find a vaccine in your area.

During the Appointment: Strongly recommend a COVID-19 vaccine at **every patient** visit. Take time to listen to patients' questions. If COVID-19 vaccines are not available at your office, offer resources to help them find a vaccination location and book an appointment.

Outreach Tips:

- **Offer a point of contact** with any vaccine-related materials you share so patients can follow up with questions. Consider sharing printed materials with a phone number in case patients don't have Internet access.
- **Talk to patients about your own vaccine experience.** Share your reasons for getting vaccinated, concerns you had, and the information that made you feel confident about getting vaccinated. Be honest about side effects you experienced. Talk about getting your family members vaccinated. Encourage your staff to do the same, if they are comfortable sharing.
- **Make the invitation personal.** Instead of a "Dear Patient" mass email, personalize your correspondence--"Dear Darren." Sign the outreach email personally from the primary healthcare provider. Find a sample letter from health care providers to their patients on CDC's website.
- **Offer virtual "office hours" for patients** who want to ask questions. This could be someone on call at a specific time or setting up a time to interact with patients and families via web conference call or on a livestream to share key messages about vaccination.
- **Make vaccination the social norm.** Highlight how many people are getting vaccinated where applicable to encourage vaccination (e.g., "87% of my patients over 50 have gotten their COVID-19 vaccine. Get yours today!")

Vaccination Provider Tips

- **Reduce amount of paperwork or steps required to make an appointment.** Look for ways you can streamline the intake process once in office (this also prevents exposure longer than necessary). Consider having patients complete paperwork ahead of time. This can also help people commit to getting vaccinated. Share messages like "Pre-fill in the paperwork at this link to make sign-in faster."
- **Schedule the second vaccine appointment** during the first appointment if using a two-dose vaccine.
- **Provide follow-up reminders** via text or email that are close to the appointment date.
- **Consider barriers your patients may face.** Ask people how they plan on getting to the appointment. Consider pointing to other accessibility resources, such as vaccinations for homebound patients, locations with expanded office hours, or offer walk-in appointments if possible. Your local health department may be able to point you to some of these resources.

Tips for talking to patients at their regular appointment:

- CDC's resources [How to talk to your patients about COVID-19 vaccination](#) and [Answering Patients' Questions](#) have tips for talking to your patients about COVID-19 vaccines.
- By the end of each regular appointment, encourage your patients to take at least one action, such as:
    - Scheduling a vaccination appointment with your facility or another vaccination provider.
    - Reading [additional information](#) you provide to them about COVID-19 vaccination.
    - Learning how they can [find a COVID-19 vaccine](#) and what to expect at their [vaccination appointment.](#)

How to Enroll as a COVID-19 Vaccination Provider

If you are interested in offering COVID-19 vaccine in your practice, [learn more about becoming a COVID-19 Vaccination Provider](#).

Resources:

[Key Things to Know about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
[Frequently Asked Questions about Vaccination](#)
[Vaccine Recipient Education](#)
[Sample letter to patients to encourage COVID-19 vaccination](#)
[Vaccines.gov (to find a vaccination provider)](#)
[Clinical Care Considerations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
[Vaccine Communication Toolkit for Medical Centers, Clinics, Pharmacies, and Clinicians](#)
Ad Council: [COVID-19 Collaborative Education Toolkit (Healthcare Provider Resources)](#)
HHS: [COVID-19 Public Education Campaign Resources](#)
HHS: [Talking Points for Health Care Leaders to Encourage Vaccine Confidence](#)