

How to talk to friends and family who are hesitant about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine



You can do your part by being a “vaccine ambassador” for your friends, family and your community. Below are strategies for you to help discuss COVID-19 vaccines with those who may be hesitant about receiving one.

“I feel like COVID-19 vaccines were rushed and we don’t really know if they are actually safe.”

Answer: Decisions to authorize vaccines for use in Canada are based on scientific and medical evidence showing that vaccines are safe and effective. Countries and scientists have been working very closely together with more funds from governments to make COVID-19 vaccines a top priority. This has made it possible to develop effective vaccines in record time without compromising safety. The safety and efficacy of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines was also evaluated in thousands of individuals who volunteered to receive the vaccine in clinical trials before vaccines were approved by Health Canada.

“I’ve done a lot of reading online about COVID-19 and the vaccines. From what I’ve read, if the virus exists at all, it’s really no worse than the flu.”

Answer: Severe, and often life altering, cases of COVID-19 have occurred and sadly will continue to occur in our community. Since the start of the pandemic, people have compared the flu and COVID-19. Here’s what we know for sure: COVID-19 seems to spread more easily than the flu and causes more serious illnesses in some people. Unlike the flu virus, the virus that causes COVID-19 is new. Because of this newness, before the pandemic began, none of us had ever been exposed to the virus or had a chance to build immunity to protect us from it. This left all of us at risk of getting COVID-19. On the other hand, because of previous infections and our strong flu vaccination programs, a large proportion of Canadians have some immunity to influenza, which helps limit the number of flu cases we see each year.

“I’m not really worried about getting sick. Because I’m young, my risk of dying from COVID-19, if I ever got it, is super low.”

Answer: While younger people are more likely to have fairly mild symptoms when diagnosed with COVID-19, unfortunately, that’s not always the case. While death rates are one way of looking at the impact of COVID-19 on different age groups, some people, including younger people, have long-term complications after getting the illness that could make it difficult for them to do the things they did before.

“I just haven’t had time to go get my vaccine yet.”

Answer: It takes roughly 20 minutes from the time you enter, to the time you leave a BCHU led vaccine clinic. That 20 minutes will go a long way in ensuring a more smooth return to normalcy and in turn protects loved ones and the community as a whole. Many local pharmacies are also administering vaccine, so odds are, you can receive a vaccine close to home as well.

