

# Talking to your patients about the COVID-19 vaccine



HPSM members trust their doctors, but many still need more convincing to take the COVID-19 vaccine. Here is a resource to help you talk to your patients about the vaccine and why they should take it.

## Is their concern about:

### **SAFETY** | **COST** | **PAIN/DISCOMFORT** | **A MISCONCEPTION**

Is it safe?	Millions of people in the United States and across the world have received a COVID-19 vaccine safely. There have been a couple outliers, but most people experience no or mild symptoms. All three vaccines have been put through the same testing to ensure their safety.
I've heard things in the news about people who had a bad reaction to the vaccine.	There have been a few outliers, but there is no pattern that is concerning. And most people who have had a bad reaction to the vaccine have recovered. The benefits of taking the vaccine far outweigh the downsides or the risks.
How was it approved so quickly?	The federal government has worked since the beginning of the pandemic to make vaccines a priority. That means they've made sure that vaccines have been developed as quickly as possible while taking some of the most strict safety protocols we've ever seen.
Can I stop wearing a mask if I get vaccinated?	The federal government has worked since the beginning of the pandemic to make vaccines a priority. That means they've made sure that vaccines have been developed as quickly as possible while taking some of the most strict safety protocols we've ever seen.
I don't want to be the first.	You won't be. Millions of people in our country have already taken the vaccine safely. Now it's your turn.
Can I stop wearing a mask if I get vaccinated?	Once you are fully vaccinated (two weeks after you have taken your final shot), you can take your mask off when outdoors in unpopulated areas. Things are changing quickly, but the one certain thing is that the more people who are vaccinated, the more we'll be able to reopen our county, state, and country!
How safe is it for me if I have an underlying condition?	People with underlying medical conditions can receive a COVID-19 vaccine as long as they have not had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Learn more: <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/specific-groups/high-risk.html">www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/specific-groups/high-risk.html</a>
I currently have COVID-19. Can I still be vaccinated?	No. People with COVID-19 or who have symptoms should wait to be vaccinated until they have recovered from their illness.
I'm pregnant. Can I get vaccinated?	Yes, you can!
How much does it cost?	It doesn't cost anything for anyone living in the United States.
I can't afford it.	There is no cost to anyone living in the United States, regardless of immigration status or health insurance.
Who is paying for this?	The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States, regardless of their immigration status or health insurance.
I can't afford to take time off work/get to the doctor's office to take it.	Homebound HPSM members may be eligible to be vaccinated at home. Others may be able to get a ride through non-emergency medical transport services. Please check <a href="http://www.hpsm.org/covid-19/vaccinations">www.hpsm.org/covid-19/vaccinations</a>
Will it hurt?	No. Most people who receive the vaccine experience no to little discomfort.
I don't want to get sick.	You won't. Most people who receive the vaccine experience no to very mild symptoms. Out of those who do experience symptoms, most go away after a day.
What are the side effects?	After getting vaccinated, you might have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. Common side effects are pain, redness, and swelling in the arm where you received the shot, as well as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea throughout the rest of the body.
I'm afraid of needles.	You don't have to see the needle if you don't wish. You can bring a friend or family member with you and let the person administering the shot that you do not wish to see the needle. Most will accommodate your request.
I've already had COVID, so I don't need the vaccine.	Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. Current evidence suggests that reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19 is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. However, experts don't know for sure how long this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity.
Why should I be vaccinated?	Vaccination means that we can reopen our community again and get back to the way things were. Vaccination can also help keep you and your friends, family, and community safe.
How many times do I need to go to the doctor to get this done?	For some of the vaccines, you will need to go twice. For the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you will only need to go once. You will have to go back in a year to get the shot again, kind of like a flu shot.
Which vaccine should I get?/Can I choose which vaccine I get?	You should take the first vaccine you have access to. All of the approved vaccines have proven effective and are safe for everyone. None are superior to any other.
How long does protection last?	Protection should last you a year, so that means you'll have to come back to the doctor for another dose a year after you are vaccinated.