

COVID-19 VACCINE NEWS YOU CAN USE

December 18, 2020
Issue 5

New Perspective

The recent news about the COVID-19 vaccines has us excited about the future. We're looking forward to providing as much information about how this will impact our residents and team members. To keep you well informed, every couple days over the coming weeks, you can expect to receive an issue of Vaccine News You Can Use from us. We'll be sharing the latest vaccine news and updates, answering your questions, and dispelling myths and rumors about the vaccines. We'll also be sending around letters, videos, tips, and answers to frequently asked questions as we orchestrate vaccination for our residents and team members.

Get the vaccine—our best shot at getting back to normal.

THE HEADLINE

It's important that everyone who **can** get the vaccine **does** get the vaccine.

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

If everyone else gets vaccinated for COVID-19, why do I need to?

- Even if you are not at high risk of COVID-19 yourself, your friends or family could be. Your being vaccinated protects not only you, but others as well.
- It will take time for everyone to receive the vaccine.
- Not everyone in your life is able to get the vaccine.
 - People who are ill or who, in the past, have had allergic reactions to vaccines or medication may not be able to get vaccinated.
 - Some people will have religious or health exemptions to vaccination.

Am I better off being infected with the virus versus getting the vaccine?

- Given all the factors around COVID-19—like the strength of your immune response or unknown underlying health or genetic issues—choosing the disease over the vaccine can be dangerous.
- COVID-19 vaccination helps protect you by creating an immunity response without having to experience critical illness and potential long-term effects, including lung and heart damage.
- Many individuals infected with the COVID-19 virus have experienced serious, life-threatening, long-term effects.
- Data suggests that there is a significant difference in the level of immunity response produced by the body after people have had the virus. In fact, the number of antibodies in studies has been wildly different in each individual. Studies show the vaccines may be more reliable in creating longer term immunity to COVID-19.

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I'm not worried about the virus. It's not that bad.

- It may not be bad for you, but everyone's experience with the virus is different. The last thing any of us wants is to be the reason that our loved ones become sick.
- As the date of this newsletter, in the United States alone:
 - Over 17 million Americans have been diagnosed with COVID-19
 - More than 115,000 Americans are currently hospitalized with COVID-19
 - Over 317,000 Americans have died from COVID-19
 - Record numbers of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths have been set every day this month

Is getting the vaccine necessary if I'm wearing a mask and practicing social distancing?

- Yes. While masks and social distancing are vitally important, they alone will not get us to the level of immunity required to end the pandemic quickly and safely.
- Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available.
- While hygiene measures such as social distancing, handwashing, and wearing masks offer some help, the best way to stop this virus is to develop specific immunity to COVID-19. This specific immunity can be achieved in one of two ways—through illness or vaccination. Since illness could lead to severe disease or death, vaccination is a better alternative.

WHAT'S IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue we send of Vaccine News You Can Use will answer the question “What’s the difference in the vaccines?” by addressing:

- What are the differences between the vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, and AstraZeneca?
- Which vaccine is better?
- Who is paying for the vaccine? Is one cheaper for me?

If you have questions about Vaccine News You Can Use, please reach out to your executive director.