



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

How to talk to your patients about COVID-19 vaccination


Patients seek health information from trusted sources. Healthcare professionals are often vaccine recipients' most-trusted source of information on vaccines. Your answers to their questions matter and will help them make an informed decision about getting a COVID-19 vaccination.

Whether you have these discussions with your patients during an in-person office visit, through messages on your patient portal, at a telemedicine appointment, or during consultation in your pharmacy, your strong vaccine recommendation is the most important part of the conversation.



Letter to Patients

Customize this letter about COVID-19 vaccination to send to your patients.

[Sample letter to patients](#)  [2 pages]

1. Start from a place of empathy and understanding.

The pandemic has been stressful for many people. The first step is to acknowledge the disruption COVID-19 has caused in all our lives. Remind patients that getting vaccinated is the most important thing they can do to move back toward normal activities.

Share information on what they can do [when they've been fully vaccinated](#).

2. Assume patients will want to be vaccinated but may not know where to get a vaccine or how to make an appointment.

It is understandable how concerning it could be for your patients if they cannot be vaccinated right away. Help them schedule an appointment at your facility or pharmacy, if available.

If you do not have COVID-19 vaccines available at your facility or pharmacy, provide resources on where patients can [find a vaccine](#).

Remind patients that many people may be trying to get vaccinated at the same time. If they are not able to get vaccinated right away, they should continue trying to [schedule a vaccination appointment](#).

Encourage patients to continue taking steps to protect themselves against COVID-19, and let them know how you plan to share updates about vaccine [availability](#).

3. Give your strong recommendation.

Let your patients know you [recommend COVID-19 vaccination](#) for them. Patients consistently rank healthcare providers as their most trusted source of vaccine information. Your strong recommendation is critical for vaccine acceptance. Tell your patients how important COVID-19 vaccines are to protecting their health, as well as the health of those around them. Talk about your personal decision to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Example:

"I strongly recommend you get a COVID-19 vaccine..."

"...This shot is especially important for you because of your [job/underlying health condition]."

"...I believe in this vaccine so strongly that I got vaccinated as soon as it was available to me, and I ensured that everyone in my family did the same."

4. Listen and respond to patient questions.

COVID-19 vaccines are new and it's understandable that your patients may have questions so they can make an informed decision about getting vaccinated.

Your willingness to listen to their concerns will play a major role in building trust in you and your recommendation. Make it clear that you understand they have questions, and you want to answer them, so they feel confident in choosing to get vaccinated.

Empathize with your patients' concerns and provide information they need in a way they can understand. Explore some of the questions patients ask most often about vaccines and use tips for answering their questions: [Answering Patients' Questions](#).

5. Wrap up the conversation.

Once you've answered their questions, let your patients know that you are open to continuing the conversation. Encourage your patients to take at least one action, such as:

- Scheduling a vaccination appointment with your facility, another vaccination provider, or pharmacy,
- Reading the additional information you provide to them about COVID-19 vaccination, or
- Learning how they can [find a COVID-19 vaccine](#) and what to expect at their [vaccination appointment](#).

Because these vaccines are new, your patients' comfort level with when to get vaccinated will vary. Continue to remind them about the importance of getting a COVID-19 vaccine during future routine visits.

Page last reviewed: April 5, 2021

Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases](#)