Most people in the United States are planning to get a COVID-19 vaccine. However, some may want more information, including information about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. Take the time to listen to people’s concerns and answer their questions. This can help them become confident in their decision to get vaccinated. **Strong confidence** in the vaccines within communities leads to more vaccinations, which in turn lead to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Consider principles from [Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication](https://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/ercom/overview.html) when communicating about COVID-19 vaccine safety.

- **Be first.** Share information and what is known, what is not known, and what is being done to fill in the gaps as quickly as possible.
- **Be right.** Ensure the information that you share is accurate in order to establish credibility.
- **Be credible.** Communicate honest, timely, and scientific evidence so the public can trust your information and guidance.
- **Express empathy.** Acknowledge what people are feeling and consider their perspectives when providing recommendations.
- **Promote action.** Keep action messages simple, short, and easy to remember.
- **Show respect.** Actively listen to the issues and solutions brought up by local communities and leaders.

When communicating about COVID-19 vaccine safety and risks, be sure to emphasize:

- **COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.**
  - Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines, and these vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.

- **COVID-19 vaccines meet all safety standards.**
  - The [Food and Drug Administration (FDA)](https://www.fda.gov) carefully reviews all safety data from clinical trials and authorizes emergency vaccine use only when the expected benefits outweigh potential risks.

- **COVID-19 vaccines will be continually monitored for safety.**
  - FDA and CDC will continue to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines to make sure even very rare side effects are identified.

- **After COVID-19 vaccination, many people will have mild side effects.**
  - Pain or swelling at the injection site, fever, chills, tiredness, or a headache are common and can be a sign that the vaccine is working.
  - A small number of people have had a severe allergic reaction (called “anaphylaxis”) after COVID-19 vaccination, but this is extremely rare. When it does happen, vaccination providers have medicines available that they can use to effectively and immediately treat the reaction.

- **The known risks associated with getting sick with COVID-19 far outweigh any potential risks of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, especially for people at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness.**

**Remember:** If a person has concerns or questions, this doesn’t necessarily mean they won’t accept a COVID-19 vaccine. Sometimes people simply want your answers to their questions.