

Approaching Vaccination Discussions: Putting it into Practice

As a Vaccine Champion, you can talk to your team, co-workers, or family to encourage them to make fact-based decisions about vaccination.

This resource provides examples of situations where you can apply the tips outlined in the "Approaching Vaccination Discussions: Communication Tips" resource on our [website](#).

SCENARIO 1

Your co-worker, who you know prioritizes and values their health and the health of their residents and co-workers, is uncertain about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, and asks "Why would I need to get a COVID-19 vaccine?"

What to Do:

- **Avoid fear-based messaging:**
 "If you don't get the COVID-19 vaccine, you are putting yourself at a risk of death/hospitalization, and putting those around you at risk."
Instead, you can say:
 "Getting a COVID-19 vaccine will protect against serious COVID-19 outcomes, reduce your risk of long COVID, and help protect the residents."
- **Tailor your approach:** Adjust your message to emphasize their priorities and values—for this specific co-worker, focusing on how getting the COVID-19 vaccine can benefit their health, the health of their co-workers, and the health of their residents may be acceptable reasons for receiving a COVID-19 shot.

SCENARIO 2

When you mention that you received a COVID-19 vaccine recently, your friend says, "Why would you do that? The mRNA vaccine can alter your DNA!"

What to Do:

- **Correct misinformation:**
 - Provide clear facts instead of repeating the misinformation. For example, "The vaccine carries instructions (mRNA) for making harmless proteins that trigger your immune system to make antibodies to protect you from the COVID-19 virus. After the proteins are made, your body destroys the mRNA and removes it from your body. Additionally, the vaccine can't alter anyone's DNA, as mRNA is never in the same location as your DNA".
 - If you do not have the facts, share ways to find credible sources.

SCENARIO 3

In a discussion about vaccines with a family member, they tell you that they feel you are judging them for not getting an Influenza vaccine.

What to Do:

- **Roll with resistance:** Emphasize that they have the freedom to choose to be vaccinated or not, that you want to make sure they know the benefits and risks of their choices, and that you're available to discuss concerns or find more information.
- **Approach conversations in a respectful, kind, informative manner:** Do not escalate this discussion into an argument. Instead, listen carefully, respond only when they have stopped speaking, and then address their concerns with empathy—with understanding, and an appreciation for their message to you.

SCENARIO 4

One of your co-workers, who you do not speak with often, states in a discussion about vaccines, "I have my reasons for not getting vaccinated".

What to Do:

- **Reframe "why":** Instead of asking "why", instead ask them about their concerns, priorities, and values. This can help you better understand how to tailor your responses to them.
- **Use storytelling:** Share your own personal stories about your experience with vaccines, including any reasons for choosing to be vaccinated that may be related to their values, priorities, and concerns.

For more information on the tips you can apply in vaccine-related conversations, see the "Approaching Vaccine Discussions: Communication Tips" resource on our [website](#).