

Quick tips for health workers for improving vaccination uptake



Vaccines protect us and those around us. As a health worker, you have a vital role in engaging your community and building strong support for immunization efforts so that families can enjoy a healthier future.

Follow these simple tips to help people in your community to receive their recommended vaccines.

Before starting vaccination

- **Plan with the community.** Together with community representatives, identify ways and resources to reach everyone with information and services, especially those in hard-to-reach areas or populations with low coverage.
- **Keep communities informed.** Organize community discussions or information sessions on the benefits of vaccines and how to access them.
- **Empower vaccination allies.** Ask for support from local leaders and influential community representatives. Equip them with the tools they need (e.g., talking points, supporting materials) to reach out to the community.
- **Be prepared for those who are unsure.** Identify some colleagues and partners to engage with people with questions, concerns or who may be undecided. **Review the useful tips on the next page!**

During vaccination

- **Make the community feel welcome.** Provide a comfortable space and maintain a friendly atmosphere.
- **Respond to questions and concerns.** Open avenues for community conversations. If you are unsure of your answer, refer the person asking to a colleague or supervisor who will be able to respond.

After vaccination efforts

- **Thank the community.** Affirm their decision to vaccinate and recognize the importance of community action in ensuring that no one is left behind unvaccinated.
- **Update vaccination advocates** on the improvements to coverage and rally their continuing support for essential immunization.
- **Remind local officials of their important role** in ensuring that the community remains up-to-date with their vaccines.

Frequently-Asked Questions

Why is it important to reach people who've missed their vaccines?

Vaccines protect against more than 20 diseases – like measles, diphtheria, polio, human papilloma virus and COVID-19 – that can affect anyone, regardless of age, so rapidly reaching the millions who have missed out is a high priority. Every child should have access to essential vaccinations.

Can vaccines cause harmful side effects?

Vaccines are very safe. Most side effects from vaccines are minor and temporary, such as a sore arm or mild fever. Serious adverse events or death are VERY rare (e.g., 1 per million doses) for most vaccines.

How do we know vaccines are safe?

Every vaccine needs to go through extensive and rigorous testing before it can be introduced in a country. Once they are in use, they must be continuously monitored to make sure they are safe for the people who receive them.

Do vaccines provide better immunity than natural infection?

Vaccines stimulate the immune system to develop protection similar to that produced by the natural infection, but do not cause the disease or put the immunized person at risk of its potential complications. Natural infection comes with the risk of serious complications related to that infection.

More FAQs here:



bit.ly/3vP6ASY

What if people are unsure about vaccination? Helpful conversation techniques

Listen with empathy

Acknowledge how they're feeling (without necessarily agreeing, for example, "**It's okay to have questions or want more information before getting a vaccine**"). Don't dismiss them.



"I hear you. It's natural to want to know more."

Ask open-ended questions

Some examples are, "**What have you heard about vaccines?**" or "**Could you tell me more?**". These questions elicit a response other than "yes" or "no" and can help you better understand their concerns and might also assist the other person in working through their thoughts.

"Interesting. Could you tell me more?"



Share trusted information

When you don't know the answer or if you're unsure about how to address their concern, offer to help look for information. **Asking for their permission** might make them more willing to listen to you rather than feeling like you're pushing unwanted information on them.



"Let me ask my colleague. I'll get back to you."

Explore reasons for wanting to get vaccinated

When discussing vaccination, nothing works as well as getting personal. If applicable, **share your own reasons for wanting to have your child vaccinated**. If you previously had concerns that you worked through, and ended up having your child vaccinated, explain what helped reassure you.

"I also thought about side effects, but they were mild and manageable."



Provide information to get a vaccine locally

Follow through with practical advice on when and where to get vaccinated.



"I can actually get you in right now if that works for you."



World Health Organization