



Strategies to Build
COVID-19 Vaccine
Confidence in
Your Community

Spring/Summer 2021

Overview

We've stayed all in for the good of our state. We've worn masks, kept our distance and washed our hands like never before.

And now, everyone in Illinois is eligible to get the life-saving Covid-19 vaccines. But the pandemic won't end until enough people get vaccinated.

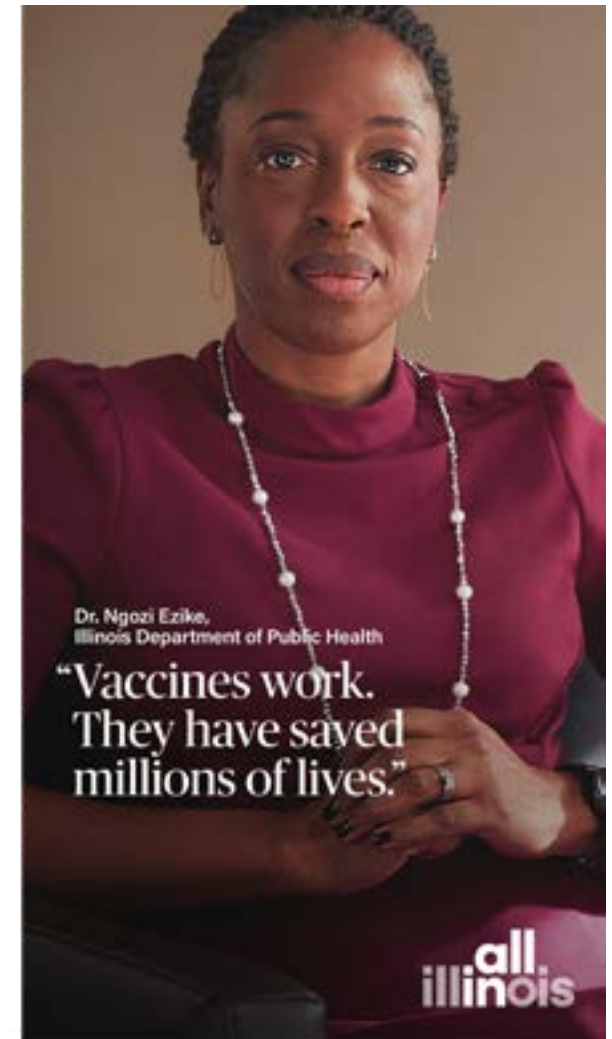
That's where community leaders like you come in.

We need Illinoisians like you to help us reach those who are unsure about getting vaccinated. Research indicates those who can share their personal experience with COVID-19 are most effective at influencing this undecided group. If you work in healthcare or public health, we know professionals in these industries are also highly-trusted messengers.

The following guide offers **data-driven tools** to help you persuade those who are on-the-fence. You'll learn how to share information about why getting the vaccine is effective, broadly popular, endorsed by medical experts and easy to get—all effective messages according to scientific research.

Who will you be targeting? People who haven't committed to getting vaccinated, who want to learn more about it or who don't know how to make an appointment. This group is where you can make the biggest impact. You won't be focusing on anti-vaxxers and people who spread misinformation.

Thank you for your help in bringing us one step closer to ending this pandemic.
Thank you for going all in, Illinois.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a dark quilted jacket with a patch on the left chest that reads "IN MEMORY OF" and "Lopez" below it. She is sitting in a room with several framed pictures on the wall behind her.

Erica Lopez,
Daughter of a First Responder

“Covid-19 took my
parents. The vaccine
means there's hope
to keep families
together.”

Dos and Don'ts When Talking about Vaccines

✔ **Do**

Emphasize vaccine effectiveness

- Vaccines go through rigorous testing to prove their protection.
- All authorized vaccines were 100% effective at preventing death and hospitalization from COVID-19.

Emphasize vaccines will allow a return to normal

- For example: Two weeks after your last dose, you can gather indoors without a mask with other fully vaccinated people OR unvaccinated people from one other household.
- Once enough of us are protected, we can all get back to our daily lives.

Share personal stories

- Have you or someone close to you had the virus?
- Those with personal connections to COVID are among the most effective messengers.

✔ **Focus on personal benefits**

- Focus on how the vaccine will have an impact in an individual's life rather than talking about how it helps the broader community.
- The most important benefit of vaccination is to help prevent you from getting sick with COVID-19.

✔ **Don't**

Use scientific jargon

- Mentioning science or the government bodies that are involved in the approval process can be ineffective, according to research. Keep it simple.

Try to counter vaccine myths

- Proactively addressing misinformation with science-focused correction can be counterproductive. Instead, focus on the effectiveness of vaccines.

Visit coronavirus.illinois.gov to find a vaccine provider. Call our toll free hotline at 833-621-1284 to make an appointment.

Let's take what you learned in the dos and don'ts and apply them practically. Here are some of the most common concerns you'll hear about the vaccine and the most effective ways to respond. You'll notice they all come back to our core messages.

-  Easy to get
-  Effective/Saves lives
-  Doctor approved
-  Popular
-  Return to normal

I'm unsure about getting the vaccine because...

I can't afford it.

How to respond: Vaccines are available to everyone at no cost. Whether you have insurance or not, there are NO out of pocket costs to get this lifesaving protection.

I've already had COVID-19 and recovered.

How to respond: People who have already had the virus should plan to get the vaccine. It's currently unclear if antibodies from your infection will naturally protect you from another COVID-19 infection in the future.

I want to wait until more people have been vaccinated.

How to respond: Hundreds of millions of people have gotten the vaccine, including nearly a third of the people in our state. There's growing momentum to get protected from the virus so we can get our lives back.

I'm worried about its side effects.

How to respond: You may experience side effects, and that's normal. They show your body has recognized the vaccine and is building protection, which means the vaccine is working. Just like the flu shot, they should go away in a day or two. Most commonly, people have a sore arm for a couple of days

Personal story example: "When I received the vaccine, I had a headache the next day, but then felt fine."

I'm concerned about safety.

How to respond: Each authorized COVID-19 vaccine was studied in trials with **tens of thousands of volunteers** and shown to be highly effective in preventing COVID-19. The trials involved people of different ages, sex, race/ethnicity, weight, and medical conditions. The results of the trials are independently reviewed before being recommended. All authorized vaccines are **100% effective** at preventing death and hospitalization from COVID.

I don't understand how it works.

How to respond: COVID-19 vaccines help our bodies build protection from the virus without the danger of getting sick.

With all vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccines, the body develops cells that will help recognize and fight that virus if you are exposed to it. It typically takes a few weeks for your body to reach full protection after getting the vaccine. This process of building immunity can sometimes cause symptoms, like fever. These symptoms are normal and indicate the vaccine is working.

I'm a healthy person and not at high-risk for COVID-19.

How to respond: Healthy people have gotten very sick, hospitalized and died from COVID-19. Even if you were infected and didn't show symptoms, you could spread the virus to others who may be at a higher-risk. Getting vaccinated will help save lives and allow us to return to normal.

I think I might be allergic to ingredients in the vaccine or I've had an allergic reaction to other vaccines.

How to respond:
Talk to your doctor to determine the right option for you.

I'm pregnant or breastfeeding.

How to respond: The CDC says women who are pregnant or breastfeeding can receive any of the available vaccines. While not required, talk to your doctor if you have any questions about your

I don't know how to make an appointment.

How to respond: Vaccines are currently available by appointment only at more than 1,000 locations across the state.

- Find a provider and more information at coronavirus.illinois.gov
- To make an appointment by phone, call our toll free hotline at 833-621-1284.

When in doubt, always pivot back to the vaccine's effectiveness and how it will allow us to return to normal. These are the two most effective messages to build vaccine confidence.

For FAQs, see Your guide to getting vaccinated toolkit. ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))

Resources

- **How to make a vaccine appointment:** Vaccines are currently available by appointment only at more than 1,000 locations across the state. Find a provider and more information at coronavirus.illinois.gov. To make an appointment by phone, call our toll free hotline at **833-621-1284**.
- Your guide to getting vaccinated toolkit ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))
- How to talk about the vaccine ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))
- Ad campaign creative ([Media kit](#))
- **How to apply for Vaccine Clinic Mobile Units:** Illinois is currently accepting applications for COVID-19 vaccine clinics in the State of IL to improve equity of vaccine distribution. Use this link to submit an application to host a clinic in your community: dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccinationclinics