

Monthly Wellness SpotLight by PSA

IN GOOD HEALTH

ARE YOU ON THE FENCE ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE? HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

The US is currently experiencing yet another wave of COVID-19 cases leading to hospitalizations and death. It is well known that vaccines reduce hospitalization and minimize serious illness and death, but vaccination numbers in the US have decreased since their peak, and many Americans remain hesitant to get vaccinated.

All of us are worn out! All of us are “over it.” After more than a year of the constant fear and stress caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we are ready to get back to “normal.” We want to gather with our friends and family freely without the threat of getting sick. We are eager to return to our favorite sports and social activities.

No one is sure when the pandemic will be over, but the absolute best way to speed up the process is through herd immunity, either from infection or vaccination. In order to achieve herd immunity, a large portion of the population must become immune to COVID-19; this makes the spread of the virus less likely.

Because of the unpredictable nature of COVID-19, it is too risky to gain immunity by getting the virus. Even if we contract the virus and are lucky enough to be asymptomatic, we could spread it to someone close to us who may become very ill and even succumb to the disease. The best way to ensure immunity without the risk is by getting the vaccine. The FDA-authorized vaccines are highly effective at protecting against serious illness.

Some may object to getting the COVID-19 vaccine due to health or religious reasons. Unfortunately, there

has been a lot of misinformation surrounding the vaccine. It's important to separate the myths from the facts for the sake of public safety and ending the pandemic. Many believe the vaccine is unsafe because it was developed too quickly. Rest assured, although it was developed quickly, it went through the same process with the Food and Drug Administration as other vaccines. Below is the CDC Link with the truth about common misconceptions concerning the COVID-19 vaccine.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>

Aside from the myths surrounding the vaccine, some have chosen not to get vaccinated because they worry that even if they get the vaccine, they will still get sick. It's true that new strains, like the Delta Variant, pose challenges. While no vaccine (for any illness) can provide 100% protection, those who are fully vaccinated are likely protected against serious illness. No one knows how long the immunity will last but getting the vaccine will improve your risk.

The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States, regardless of immigration or health status. To find a shot near you, go to <https://www.vaccines.gov/>.

If you have personal health concerns and questions, please reach out to your trusted health care professional for advice. Make sure all of your questions are answered so you can make an informed decision.