

# Talking About Vaccines

## Tips for Health Care Workers

As we have seen through the COVID-19 pandemic, health care providers are on the frontlines when it comes to keeping people in the community healthy and safe. They are some of the most trusted and influential messengers when it comes to questions related to health, and community members look to them to provide accurate information. This role as educator and trusted advisor is particularly vital as it relates to routine wellness vaccines.



### Tips for communicating about vaccines:

- **Approach with Curiosity:** Start vaccine conversations by creating space for questions and concerns and offering resources to help make informed choices. It is important to do this in a way that allows people to feel heard, but does not inadvertently reinforce fears.
- **Ask Questions to Understand Concerns:** Try to get at the heart of hesitancy by asking questions for clarity and understanding. If they have specific concerns that are based on false information, explore how they heard it and why it is resonating with them. This can help give insights on how to best counter the misinformation.
- **Correct Misinformation:** It is important not to get into a debate with someone, but it is also critical not to let false information stand on its own. Respectfully correct incorrect claims and be ready with citations.
- **Explain Process and History:** Be prepared to explain how vaccines work, are tested, and what we know about them. It can be helpful for someone to learn that many vaccines have been around for decades and are extensively studied.
- **Frame Proactively:** Share with a patient when they are due for a vaccine and/or when a vaccine (like the flu or COVID booster) is available versus just asking their opinion. This helps create momentum towards action.
- **Be Ready with Additional Information:** If someone is hesitant about getting vaccinated, it may take more than one conversation. Be ready to share additional resources and keep the conversation going.

### Learn more:

- [Foundation for a Healthy North Dakota's Webinar: Children's Wellness Vaccine Best Practices](#)
- [CDC: For Health Care Professionals – Talking to Parents about Vaccines](#)
- [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Vaccine Education Center](#)
- [Center for Immunization Research and Education \(CIRE\)](#)
- [NDHHS-Immunizations](#)
- [Voices for Vaccines: Healthcare Provider Toolkit](#)