

Quick conversation tips to encourage people to get vaccinated.

For Health Professionals and the vaccination workforce.

1. Assume people are willing to get vaccinated.

Research shows that most people who aren't sure about vaccination will get vaccinated, so it's possible that they just need reassurance, information or support to help them make an informed decision. Be careful not to make assumptions about why they are unsure, and keep in mind that they may have complex reasons for taking their time to decide.

2. Keep in mind getting vaccinated is an act of trust.

Trust is built through relationships, reassurance and connection. As a health professional you are likely to be trusted by your community so you can build on that trust.

Be aware that people who have negative experiences within our health system, or with other services, are less likely to have trust in the system, and may prefer to talk to people who share their experience or a member of their own community.

3. Use the Ask-Tell-Ask approach to engage in active listening.

When people express concern about vaccination, be open to hearing their point of view. For a few minutes, they are the expert: only they know what is going on in their world and why they have concerns about getting vaccinated. This could look like:

- a) **ASK:** Invite them to share their thoughts, and show them that you will listen without judgement: *"Could you share your thoughts with me? It'd be good to hear what you think."*
 - ▶ Repeat back what you've heard and ask them to confirm.
- b) **TELL:** If they raise specific concerns, for example about vaccine side effects or long-term impacts, focus on the positives you want to convey rather than simply dismissing concerns or false information using facts (see tip 4 below).
- c) **ASK:** *"Does that make sense to you? How do you feel about that?"*

4. Lead with values before evidence.

Remember to lead with values-centric messaging about care and love for people in the community, which is more reassuring than evidence about safety and risks. Talk about why vaccination matters to you and why you care as a health professional. Most people want to protect the vulnerable people in their community, and support people close to them. If you talk about how you want to too it connects you, puts you on the same level and builds trust.

5. Use plain language and effective metaphors.

People may have limited understanding of how health systems and vaccinations work, and the jargon that comes with it. Using plain language and relatable metaphors can help you deepen people's understanding. Learning, factory, building and tool metaphors can be useful for talking about vaccinations. For example:

- ▶ *"Vaccines power up your immune system so it can produce its own natural protection."*
- ▶ *"The antibodies that protect us are made by your own body."*

6. Don't forget to emphatically recommend vaccination.

After ASK-TELL-ASK, again recommend the person gets vaccinated. Ultimately, the most productive conversations are about connecting with people, not correcting them. If you treat people respectfully, acknowledge concerns, and share their values they may well choose to vaccinate, if not today, then in the future - thanks to the dialogue you have had with them.

immune.org.nz



The Immunisation
Advisory Centre