

How to Advocate for Your Safety During COVID-19

It can be hard to stand up for yourself when someone around you has not gotten or will not get their COVID-19 shot. Here are some tips on ways to advocate for your safety or find ways to stay safe around those who are not vaccinated. You have the final decision about what you are comfortable doing.



Decide What You are Comfortable with and Stick to It

Before you talk to others, decide what you are comfortable with. Think about these questions:

- Are you comfortable being a person who is NOT vaccinated?
- Do you feel safe doing outdoor activities when you can stay 6 feet from other people?
- Would you prefer that everyone wears a mask both indoors and outdoors?
- Are you comfortable going out in public such as to a grocery store or restaurant?

It helps to write down your answers. Make a list. Share your answers with people who support you.

Use your list to practice what to say to an unvaccinated person. Think about what others might say when you share your list.

- Some people will respect you
- Others might get mad
- Some people might laugh

Be clear about what you need to be comfortable. Once you decide what to put on your list stick to it.



Express Your Feelings

It can be powerful to say, “It makes me sad that I cannot see you because you are NOT vaccinated.” Then share what you wrote on your list. Say what you need to feel comfortable. And stick to it for your own safety. Let them know, “I still care about you. I wish I could see you. But my health and safety come first.”



Avoid Judgement

You may be upset with people who will not get the shot. Try to stay calm. Do not say things that hurt their feelings. It might make things worse.

To encourage people to get a vaccine, listen without judging them. You may not agree with what they say. You may not understand why they have not gotten the shot. Try to be supportive and listen to their experience.



Stick to the Facts

It is important to stick to the facts. There is a lot of incorrect information about COVID-19. People might get upset talking about the COVID-19 shot. Only use information you know is true. Try to avoid getting into an argument and be respectful. It is also okay to end the conversation if don't feel comfortable.



Choose Safer Activities When Possible

Sometimes, you will be around people who are NOT vaccinated. You might live in the same house as them. You might have a support staff who is NOT vaccinated. There are things you can do to support your health and safety.

- Tell your agency if you want to only have staff that are vaccinated
- Wear a mask. Ask others to wear a mask when they are in your home.
- Choose outdoor activities, whenever possible. When indoors pick a place with fresh air or open windows.
- Ask people to stay at least 6 feet away from you. If they need to be closer to you ask them to wear a mask.