

COVID-19

Issue Brief

The MEDBOX team publishes issue briefs on different topics around COVID-19. Registered MEDBOX users can see the latest documents in the 'My News' section by selecting their personal preferences under 'My Profile'.

Myths & COVID-19 Vaccinations

Many studies have shown the effectiveness of vaccination against COVID-19 and that it protects against severe illness. A high vaccination rate is needed to combat the pandemic worldwide. Due to misinformation and myths, there is still a great hesitancy to vaccinate. With this Issue Brief, we would like to present various myths and provide you with educational materials on the respective topics for communication in the MEDBOX. More information you can find in the COVID-19 Toolbox subcategories: [Vaccine hesitancy & Myths](#), [Communication Material](#) and [Videos](#).

Myth: Vaccines cause infertility in men and women

Myths that COVID vaccines can cause infertility and even erectile dysfunction have done the rounds on social media. WHO recommends COVID-19 vaccines to all people, including those who plan to have children. Vaccination should not be a reason to postpone or avoid pregnancy. There is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, affect fertility in women or men," WHO said. "Since the COVID-19 vaccination was rolled-out, many vaccinated women became pregnant without any problems. WHO continues monitoring safety of COVID-19 vaccines, including their impact on fertility. Studies have yet to link any vaccine-related problems with pregnancy and foetal development, or menstrual cycles and fertility in women or men. In fact, studies and experts say it is more dangerous not to get the vaccine. To date, none of the vaccines have been reported to cause infertility following vaccination. A likely source of this misconception is a letter that was sent to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) by two European anti-vaccination propagandists that erroneously claimed that the vaccine contains a spike protein called syncytin-1 that is vital for the human placenta in women. Pregnant women were excluded from the vaccine's clinical trial during the initial development; however, the trials are being expanded to include them in the population groups of new clinical studies.

COVID-19 vaccines & fertility
Science in Motion

<https://www.medbox.org/document/covid-19-vaccines-fertility>
<https://youtu.be/EAWOqsO4oKA>



Myth: COVID-19 vaccines are not safe for pregnant women

WHO recommends vaccinating pregnant women when the benefits of vaccination outweigh the potential risks. The information from studies conducted after the introduction of the mRNA vaccines, showed that pregnant women develop antibodies after the vaccination and these antibodies are actually transported in cord blood and breast milk. This suggests that the vaccination will protect not only pregnant women but also their children at an early age. A recent population-based study from Israel showed that vaccinated pregnant women had a significantly lower risk of COVID-19 infection.

WHO SciencE in 5 Episode #41 - Vaccines, pregnancy, menstruation, lactation and fertility

World Health Organization WHO



Should women who are breastfeeding infants get vaccinated? How about women who are pregnant or planning to get pregnant? Or women who are menstruating?

<https://www.medbox.org/document/who-sciencE-in-5-episode-41-vaccines-pregnancy-menstruation-lactation-and-fertility>
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-41--vaccines-pregnancy-menstruation-lactation-and-fertility>

COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC

Although the overall risk of severe illness is low, pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared with non-pregnant people. Severe illness includes illness that requires hospitalization, intensive care, need for a ventilator or special equipment to breathe, or illness that results in death. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 are at increased risk of preterm birth and might be at increased risk of other adverse pregnancy outcomes, compared with pregnant women without COVID-19.



<https://www.medbox.org/document/covid-19-vaccines-while-pregnant-or-breastfeeding>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/pregnancy.html>

Myth: The vaccine has an impact on menstrual cycle

On blogs and across social media, women have shared their stories of a change to their menstrual cycle, such as changes to the regularity and volume (heavier or lighter periods). Your menstrual cycle cannot be affected by being near someone who received a COVID-19 vaccine. Many things can affect menstrual cycles, including stress, changes in your schedule, problems with sleep, and changes in diet or exercise. Infections may also affect menstrual cycles.

WHO Science in 5 Episode #41 - Vaccines, pregnancy, menstruation, lactation and fertility

World Health Organization WHO



What is the guidance for vaccination of women with breastfeeding infants, women who are pregnant or planning to get pregnant and women who are menstruating? What about vaccines and fertility? WHO's Dr Soumya Swaminathan explains in Science in 5.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/who-science-in-5-episode-41-vaccines-pregnancy-menstruation-lactation-and-fertility>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-41--vaccines-pregnancy-menstruation-lactation-and-fertility>

Myth: Different vaccines are being developed for Africa that encourage depopulation

In December 2020, a misleading video emerged claiming that Bill Gates funded vaccine innovation to forcefully vaccinate Africans for the purpose of depopulation. It claimed that the vaccine will contain microchip surveillance technology by Gates' foundation research. These claims have been debunked. The vaccines were created using approved biotechnological research methods and tested in clinical trial subject groups that consisted of a large and diverse subset of people. These vaccines have been approved by the WHO and adopted by multiple national Centers for Disease Prevention and Control.

WHO Science in 5 #13 - COVID-19 - Vaccine trials

World Health Organization WHO

Learn what scientists look for in the different phases of a clinical trial for a vaccine. What does it mean when a vaccine trial is halted due to an adverse event? WHO's Dr Kate O'Brien explains in Science in 5 this week



<https://www.medbox.org/document/who-science-in-5-13-covid-19-vaccine-trials>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-13--covid-19--vaccine-trials>

WHO's Science in 5 Episode #17 - COVID-19 - Vaccine approval

World Health Organization WHO

As vaccines get approved by national authorities, learn about National and WHO approval processes for vaccines and how safety is ensured during emergency approval of vaccines. Dr Mariângela Simão explains in Science in 5.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/whos-science-in-5-episode-17-covid-19-vaccine-approval>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-17---covid-19---vaccine-approvals>



Myth: The COVID-19 vaccine is not safe because it was developed so quickly

Prior to the arrival of the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, there was much research done on similar coronaviruses called SARS and MERS. As COVID-19 became a global pandemic, governments and companies put resources toward prioritising COVID-19 treatments and vaccines. Researchers have been developing and researching an mRNA vaccine platform for over 10 years as the pre-existing technology with an already working process that had been studied for the production of Ebola vaccines was evaluated for other vaccine uses, such as in the fight against dengue. Thus, once the SARS-CoV-2 was sequenced, it took just a few days to make the mRNA vaccine candidates.

Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines

World Health Organization WHO

31 March 2021 This article is part of a series of explainers on vaccine development and distribution. Learn more about vaccines – from how they work and how they're made to ensuring safety and equitable access – in WHO's Vaccines Explained series. Countries around the world are rolling out COVID-19 vaccines, and a key topic of interest is their safety. Vaccine safety is one of WHO's highest priorities, and we're working closely with national authorities to develop and implement standards to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/safety-of-covid-19-vaccines>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/safety-of-covid-19-vaccines>



Answering Your Questions About the Safety and Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccines

CDC

This document provides answers to FAQs healthcare providers and staff may have about COVID-19 vaccines

<https://www.medbox.org/document/answering-your-questions-about-the-safety-and-effectiveness-of-covid-19-vaccines>



How mRNA Vaccines Work - Simply Explained

Simply Explained

mRNA vaccines have the potential to end the COVID-19 pandemic. How do they work? Are they safe? And how could they've been developed so quickly?

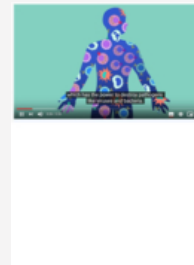
<https://www.medbox.org/document/how-mrna-vaccines-work-simply-explained>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0vvyqJ-vwo>



Vaccines 101: How vaccines work *Nature Video*

As the world waits for a potential COVID-19 vaccine, we delve into how vaccines actually work. What are the different types of vaccine? How do they trigger and train the immune system, and what is the role of herd immunity?

<https://www.medbox.org/document/vaccines-101-how-vaccines-work>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SKmAlQtAj8>



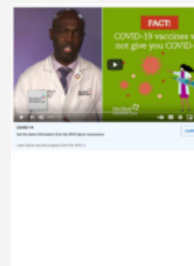
Myth: Getting the COVID-19 vaccine gives you COVID-19

The vaccine for COVID-19 cannot and will not give you COVID-19. The two authorized mRNA vaccines instruct your cells to reproduce a protein that is part of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which helps your body recognize and fight the virus, if it comes along. The COVID-19 vaccine does not contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus, so you cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine. The protein that helps your immune system recognize and fight the virus does not cause infection of any sort.

COVID-19 will not give you COVID-19 (Video) *Heartford Health Care*

COVID-19 Myth Busters

<https://www.medbox.org/document/covid-19-will-not-give-you-covid-19-video>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wg5QnUdLoek>



Understanding How COVID-19 Vaccines Work *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC*

27 May 2021

<https://www.medbox.org/document/understanding-how-covid-19-vaccines-work>

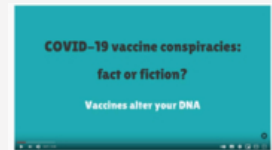


Myth: The COVID-19 vaccine enters your cells and changes your DNA

COVID-19 vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. Both mRNA and viral vector COVID-19 vaccines deliver instructions (genetic material) to our cells to start building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. However, the material never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept.

Do vaccines alter your DNA?

Science in Motion

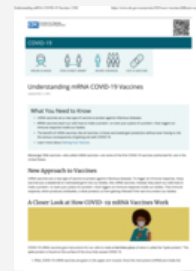


<https://www.medbox.org/document/do-vaccines-alter-your-dna>

<https://youtu.be/gX2MJfN7Ct8>

Understanding mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC



<https://www.medbox.org/document/understanding-mrna-covid-19-vaccines>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mrna.html#print>

Myth: The vaccine contains aborted fetuses

The claim that the vaccine contained aborted fetuses stemmed from the fact that the vaccine contains fetal cell lines, which are completely different from fetal tissue. Fetal cell lines (not fetal tissue) are sometimes used in the development, confirmation or production process of making vaccines – including the COVID-19 vaccine. Science Magazine has reported that cells derived from elective abortions have been used since the 1960s to develop vaccines such as chickenpox, hepatitis A, shingles and rubella, as well as drugs for diseases like cystic fibrosis, hemophilia and rheumatoid arthritis. It is important to note the moral dilemma this may create for faith-based groups against abortion; however, the Vatican in December 2020 deemed the use of vaccine derived from fetal cells as morally acceptable given the grave danger of the pandemic.

Note on the morality of using some anti-Covid-19 vaccines

Holy See Press Office

21.12.2020 Available in English, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese

<https://www.medbox.org/document/note-on-the-morality-of-using-some-anti-covid-19-vaccines>



Fact Sheets & Resource Platforms Myths & Misinformation

COVID-19 Vaccines: Myth Versus Fact

Kelen, G.D.; and L.Lockerd Maragakis

The authors review some common myths circulating about the vaccine and clear up confusion with reliable facts.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/covid-19-vaccines-myth-versus-fact>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines-myth-versus-fact>



Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC

It can be difficult to know which sources of information you can trust. Learn more about finding credible vaccine information. Updated 19 August 2021

<https://www.medbox.org/document/myths-and-facts-about-covid-19-vaccines>

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



Vaccines explained

World Health Organization WHO

WHO's 'Vaccine Explained' series features illustrated articles on vaccine development and distribution. Learn more about vaccines from the earliest of research stages to their rollout in countries. Available in different languages

<https://www.medbox.org/document/vaccines-explained>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/covid-19-vaccines/explainers>



Corona Crash Course Unit 5: Vaccine

Jesuit Worldwide Learning

In this unit we will learn about vaccines and what is the progress made for developing a vaccine for COVID-19. Jesuit Worldwide Learning invites you to learn facts and test your knowledge on the ongoing pandemic caused by Coronavirus (COVID 19) through a fun-interactive crash course! Access is free! You have only to sign up

<https://www.medbox.org/document/corona-crash-course-unit-5-vaccine>

<https://sis.jwl.global/apply/corona>

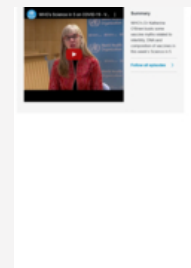


WHO in Science Episode #24 - Vaccine myths vs science

World Health Organization WHO

<https://www.medbox.org/document/who-in-science-episode-24-vaccine-myths-vs-science>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-24--vaccine-myths-vs-science>



Addressing Rumors or Myths and Role in Vaccine Safety Events

UN Children's Fund UNICEF

The immunization program has been going well until a rumor begins that one child in a community far from the capital has become sick after receiving a vaccine. The

rumor is becoming stronger every day and is picking up coverage on local radio. Concerned that the rumor might make caregivers concerned about bringing their children for vaccination, a few frontline workers (FLWs) go to the house of the children who fell sick. They find out from the child's mother that she never thought her son was sick due to the vaccination he received. The mother agrees to speak to other caregivers during a community gathering to explain that her son's illness was not caused by his vaccination. She also responds to a few questions to reassure other caregivers about the safety and advantages of immunization.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/addressing-rumors-or-myths-and-role-in-vaccine-safety-events>

<https://youtu.be/P-5CJFhjQDQ>

Information material on the COVID-19 vaccination: Explanatory videos
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft/ Swiss Confederation

Available in English, German, French and Italian

<https://www.medbox.org/document/information-material-on-the-covid-19-vaccination-explanatory-videos>

<https://foph-coronavirus.ch/downloads/information-material-on-the-covid-19-vaccination-explanatory-videos/>

10 steps to community readiness: What countries should do to prepare communities for a COVID-19 vaccine, treatment or new test
World Health Organization WHO; IFRC; UNICEF and GOARN

8 February 2021 This document highlights 10 well established Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) principles that have proven their power. Together they put communities at the heart of the roll out of new vaccines, treatments and tests and promote trust, the critical ingredient for all community action. Informed, engaged and empowered communities are the bedrock for the arrival of new vaccines, treatments and tests that will be introduced to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and save lives.

<https://www.medbox.org/document/10-steps-to-community-readiness-what-countries-should-do-to-prepare-communities-for-a-covid-19-vaccine-treatment-or-new-test>

How to talk about vaccines

World Health Organization WHO

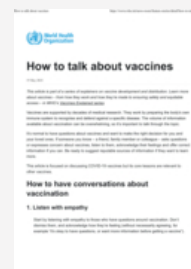
Vaccines are supported by decades of medical research. They work by preparing the body's own immune system to recognise and defend against a specific disease. The volume of information available about vaccination can be overwhelming, so it's important to talk through the topic. Available in different languages

<https://www.medbox.org/document/how-to-talk-about-vaccines>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/how-to-talk-about-vaccines>

We used following sources for the texts:

Sources: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines-myth-versus-fact>; <https://www.africaportal.org/features/myths-and-models-whats-driving-vaccine-hesitancy-in-africa-and-how-can-we-overcome-it/>; <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>



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