

# Getting Patients to Vaccination Station

**A** Ask if they would like to get vaccinated

If person is hesitant then

**S** Solicit their main concern

If they are interested in more information then

**O** Offer to address their concern

After addressing concerns then

**R** Recommend the annual vaccine

If person refuses the vaccine then

**T** Try again later



**ASORT** is a five-step process that rural pharmacists have used with success to talk with people about the COVID-19 vaccine in a non-confrontational way.

*This process can take less than three minutes from start to finish!*

## Key Elements for a Calm Conversation

Listen without judging

Share your personal vaccine experience

Share information when they are ready to learn more

Step	Recommendations & Example Verbiage
<p><b>A</b>sk if they would like to get vaccinated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are not interested in the vaccine or are hesitant aren't going to ask about it. That's why it's important for pharmacists to initiate the conversation with people who they think may be hesitant. This conversation does not have to be uncomfortable though!</li> <li>• Examples of ways to start the conversation are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"While you're here today, let's see if you're up to date on your vaccinations."</i></li> <li><i>"Have you heard about the new recommendations for the Covid-19 vaccine?"</i></li> <li><i>"I noticed when I was filling your medications that we don't have records of these vaccines in the last year for you."</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Offer praise to people who are up-to-date on their vaccination.</li> <li>• For people who you think are highly hesitant or opposed to vaccinations, you can start the conversation by asking about the vaccine more generally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"I'm trying to decide how much COVID-19 vaccine to order for the pharmacy this Fall. Would you be interested in getting the vaccine?"</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• People who say no or are unsure about getting the vaccine should be considered vaccine hesitant, and you should move to the next step.</li> </ul>
<p><b>S</b>olicit their main vaccine concern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to APhA, most people who are vaccine hesitant want to be heard. Listening to their concerns is key to keeping negative emotions and reactions to a minimum.</li> <li>• People often have multiple concerns about the vaccine, but one concern will likely loom larger than the others, so this is the concern to focus on.</li> <li>• Some people may start talking about their concerns right away when you ask them if they've been vaccinated. Make sure you understand which of their concerns is the most important to their decision to vaccinate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"You mentioned that you're concerned about the vaccine side effects. Is that your main concern about the vaccine?"</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• You might want to repeat back what you heard using their own words to make sure you understood their concern correctly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"It sounds like you're concerned that you've already gotten too much exposure to COVID-19 and don't want to get exposed again with another shot. Is that right?"</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>O</b>ffer to address their concerns and then address concerns for those who are open to the discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People have different levels of readiness to discuss the vaccine, so it's important to ask for permission to share more information about their concerns.</li> <li>• Start by validating their concern so they know that you're not judging them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"I know several other people who have had that same concern and I've shared some information with them that they've found useful. I'd be happy to share that same information with you if you want."</i></li> <li><i>"I've been keeping up to date with the newest information about the vaccine and I'd be happy to share that information with you if you want."</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Most people will be open to having you share what you know. See <a href="#">Addressing Vaccine Concerns</a> for suggested ways to address common vaccine concerns. Then move to the letter <b>R</b> in the ASORT process.</li> <li>• Some people won't be ready for more information and that's okay. Just let them know that you understand.</li> <li>• For individuals who aren't ready, skip to the letter <b>T</b> in the ASORT process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>R</b>ecommend the vaccine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most important step of the ASORT process is to recommend the vaccine.</li> <li>• A recommendation from a trusted health professional is one the most effective interventions to increase vaccination uptake.</li> <li>• Many people living in rural communities see their community pharmacist more often than they see their doctors, which means they trust you. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"I recommend the vaccine for you."</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• You can also tie your recommendation to any factors that may put them or their family members at higher risk for severe COVID-19 complications, including age. This makes the recommendation more personal.</li> <li>• It is likely that many patients will ask about your vaccination status. If you are vaccinated and comfortable sharing, this can be a powerful motivator for those who are vaccine hesitant. Sharing your story and your reasoning can be very helpful. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"I wouldn't recommend the vaccine if I didn't think it was safe. I received it and I trust it. That's why I recommend that you get the vaccine - because I care about you and want to keep you safe."</i></li> <li><i>"I got it because I want to stack the deck in my favor. Thinking about what could happen if I got COVID versus if I got the vaccine, it felt like the complications from COVID could be a lot worse."</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the person agrees to be vaccinated, then vaccinate on-site if possible or connect them to other resources where they can get vaccinated.</li> <li>• If they are still unsure or refuse, then move to the letter <b>T</b> in the ASORT process.</li> </ul>

**T**ry again later if they refuse or are unsure

- Many of the people you talk with will still be hesitant about the vaccine, or may refuse it.
- As we've seen over the years, many people who said they would never get the vaccine have since changed their minds. So don't be discouraged if they refuse. React in a positive way and let them know you'll check in with them again.  
*"Thanks for considering it. I'll check in with you again if I hear any new information about your concern."*
- Because people can and do change their minds, it's important to try again during one of their next visits to the pharmacy.
- For regular customers, you can keep a list of people to follow up with or make a note in the pharmacy record to follow up.
- For patients who you don't know well, following up can be harder. You probably want to have several interactions with them so you can build a trusting relationship before you revisit the conversation.  
*"Hi Jennifer. I heard some new information about blood clots and the COVID-19 vaccine. Would you be interested in hearing about it?"*