

## WOMEN & CHILDREN

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
<p>VACCINATING CHILDREN</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “I don’t know if I should get my kids vaccinated because I see so many adults say how horrible their side effects have been. I would never want my child to go through that.”</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>“I’ve heard that the vaccine is making kids more likely to have heart problems in the future, so I don’t want to get my kids vaccinated.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>            “I hear you. I’m a parent/aunt/uncle/grandparent myself and feel protective over my kids too. Here’s why we decided to have our kids/nieces/nephews/grandkids get vaccinated. The vaccine helps prevent kids from getting COVID and experiencing the worst impacts of COVID.<sup>7</sup> The most common side effects kids report from the vaccine is feeling tired or nauseous for about a day, which is why I recommend scheduling their vaccine on a Saturday or a day when they don’t have school.<sup>8</sup> I have also heard about heart problems and recently read a study that showed that the risk of having heart problems was actually higher from getting COVID-19 than from getting the vaccine.<sup>8</sup> That means kids actually have lower risk of heart problems if they get the vaccine.”</p> <p>Also see responses to side effects, safety, and mistrust the vaccine.</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p> <p><a href="#">COVID VACCINES ARE SAFE, EFFECTIVE, AND FREE FOR KIDS 5 AND OLDER</a></p>
<p>INFERTILITY</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “I’ve heard that the COVID vaccine is causing people to become infertile or at least making it difficult to get pregnant. I want kids in the future, and I really don’t want to risk it.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>            “I totally understand not wanting to risk your ability to get pregnant. The trials that looked at vaccine safety included thousands of pregnant women who were closely monitored for negative outcomes. These studies show that there is no difference in</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p>the number of vaccinated and unvaccinated women who were able to get pregnant. There are also newer studies that show the vaccines do not affect male fertility. I'm glad you brought this up because incorrect information about this issue has been shared over and over again on social media and is confusing a lot of people. As your pharmacist, I hope you consider getting the vaccine as it has no impact on people's ability to get pregnant and will only strengthen your body against COVID."</p>	
MISCARRIAGE	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> "I am pregnant right now and a friend of mine said she knows someone who got the vaccine while pregnant and then miscarried. I cannot imagine having to go through that so I would rather not get the vaccine at all."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> "I am really sorry that happened to her. That's very difficult to go through, and I hope she is being supported by her doctor and loved ones during this time. I do want to address your concerns about miscarriage. A recent study with almost 14,000 women found that there was not an increased risk of miscarriage in women who got the vaccine."<sup>11</sup></p> <p>"Other studies have found that pregnant women who get the vaccine pass on antibodies to protect their child from COVID.<sup>12</sup> This reduces the risk of new babies being hospitalized within the first six months of birth. As your pharmacist, I believe the vaccine can protect both you and your child against the negative health effects of COVID."</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

## COVID BELIEFS

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
NATURAL IMMUNITY IS BETTER	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> "I've had COVID a couple times already. Doesn't that mean I can't get it anymore because my body knows how to fight it off now? I don't think I need the vaccine at all."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> "COVID-19 is similar to the flu in that it mutates into new variants over time. So far, we've had the Delta variant, Omicron variant, and several others. While there is a</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p>certain amount of immunity your body has built up from being vaccinated or getting COVID-19 previously, we don't know how much this protects you against the latest COVID-19 variant.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>Each season, the vaccine attempts to target the most current variant. That is why it is important to get the vaccine each season, so that you are less likely to get sick or experience major symptoms from the latest COVID-19 variant. Getting the vaccine is the best way of protecting yourself and others from COVID-19.”</p>	
NOT A SERIOUS ILLNESS ANYMORE	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> “COVID was only serious in 2020. It's been years now and the people I know who have gotten COVID recently just get mild symptoms not much different than a cold. I don't see why we need to keep pressing vaccination against something that isn't a huge issue anymore.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> “I can understand how things feel different now than in the early days of the pandemic in 2020. But COVID is still an illness to take seriously. For example, the weekly number of new hospitalizations due to COVID-19 in the US was around 20,000 in early September 2023 and as we head into fall, that number is <u>increasing</u>.<sup>22</sup> COVID is a respiratory illness, and any respiratory illness can weaken the lungs. This can be especially dangerous for those who have conditions like COPD and asthma. With RSV and the flu circulating as well, I encourage you to get vaccinated for COVID-19.”</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

## SAFETY CONCERNS

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
DOCTOR RECOMMENDATION	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> “My doctor told me not to get the Covid vaccine.” OR “My doctor says I don't need the Covid vaccine.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> “I definitely don't want to contradict your doctor, but there's new information out that your doctor may not have immediate access to, and I do. I'd be happy to share that information with you so you can be as up to date as possible to develop your own opinion. While your doctor has many different aspects of your healthcare to keep up with, medications and vaccines are my specialty. I am very knowledgeable about the</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

	<p>medications you are on, and I don't have any concerns about negative interactions between your medications and the Covid vaccine. Based on your medications/medical history, I do recommend the vaccine for you so you can be as protected as possible."</p>	
DNA FRAGMENTS	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "I've heard that the vaccines contain fragments of DNA from the SV40 virus that could be harmful and even cause cancer. I also heard the SV40 virus was removed from polio vaccines due to safety concerns. Why isn't this being removed from the COVID vaccine?"</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I hear you; this kind of information can cause fear and concern. But there is no need to be concerned about SV40 DNA fragments. The polio vaccines used an outdated manufacturing process, and the process is a lot safer now. It is impossible for other DNA fragments to merge with or harm our DNA. Over a billion doses of the mRNA Covid vaccines have been administered and no safety concerns related to DNA fragments have been identified.<sup>57</sup> I recommend the Covid vaccines; they are safe and effective in helping to prevent catching Covid and experiencing the worst impacts of the Covid virus. If the thought of getting an mRNA vaccine still makes you nervous, there is a more traditional protein vaccine called Novavax that is available now. We could investigate where that is available if that sounds more appealing to you."</p> <p>Direct patient to the video under this concern on the patient resources page if they are interested in more information addressing this concern – also available under Reference #58.</p> <p>Also see responses to vaccine beliefs and mistrust.</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
THE VACCINE CAUSES CANCER	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "My sister got a booster of the COVID vaccine and then a couple weeks later she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She's always been very health conscious, so I'm sure it was the vaccine that caused this."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b></p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

"I am so sorry to hear about your sister's diagnosis. I hope she is getting the support and treatments she needs. I have heard your concern before and read similar claims in the media, so I looked into it and found that numerous sources, such as the American Cancer Society and Mayo Clinic say there is no evidence to suggest COVID vaccines cause cancer.<sup>35,36</sup> Instead, research centers, such as City of Hope, note that increasing rates of cancers seem to be caused by other factors, like family history, diet, and lack of physical activity.<sup>37</sup> The American Cancer Society actually recommends that cancer caregivers and close contacts get vaccinated to lower the risk of the cancer patient getting COVID, which can be especially dangerous since cancer and/or treatments weaken their immune systems.<sup>35</sup> One other thing I want you to know is that I personally know people who were diagnosed with cancer, and it was not caused by the COVID vaccine. The point of the vaccine is to keep us all safe and healthy."

Only mention below if patient mentions that mRNA vaccines cause turbo-cancers

**Patient Concern:**

"I saw on Facebook that mRNA vaccines can cause turbo-cancers. I have a family history of cancer, so I don't want to risk getting this vaccine."

**Pharmacist Response:**

"I have also heard of some concerns about mRNA vaccines causing turbo-cancers, or cancers which grow quickly. The latest evidence is showing that the technology of mRNA vaccines can be used in certain cases to stop and even reduce cancer growth.<sup>38</sup> If you are still uncomfortable with receiving a mRNA vaccine, some pharmacies offer the Novavax vaccine, which works differently.<sup>39</sup> The Novavax vaccine works in the same way as the Tdap, Hepatitis B, and polio vaccines, which have been used for many decades and are known to be safe."<sup>40</sup>

WORRIED ABOUT UNKNOWN OR UNDIAGNOSED HEALTH PROBLEMS

**Patient Concern:**

"Multiple members of my family have an autoimmune disease. I'm worried that I might have one too but I'm not sure and if I get the vaccine, I'll start showing symptoms."

PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE

	<p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          “I understand your concerns. Because people with autoimmune disease are at higher risk of severe complications from COVID-19, it is generally recommended that you get the vaccine even if you have an autoimmune disease.<sup>14</sup> If you do not have an autoimmune disease, the vaccine would only improve your system’s ability to fight COVID-19.</p> <p>There are many ongoing studies examining whether the vaccine causes people with autoimmune diseases to experience flares. The evidence to date suggests that the risk of flares and other negative reactions are low.<sup>14</sup> If you’re concerned about a particular disease, you should talk with your doctor and see what they think. If they recommend the vaccine, we’d be more than happy to provide you with it here in the pharmacy.”</p>	
<p>MEDICATION INTERACTIONS</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          “How will the vaccine affect other medicines I’m on?”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          “That is a great question. From what we know so far, there is very little chance of any negative interactions between the vaccine and most medications. This is because the COVID vaccine affects your immune system and most everyday medications don’t go near that system.<sup>15</sup> There are, of course, exceptions, and I will let you know if there are any medications you should be concerned about.”</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>STATES ARE SUING VACCINE COMPANIES</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          “The state of Kansas is suing Pfizer for misleading the public about the vaccine being safe and effective. How can I get the vaccine when the safety and efficacy of the vaccine is being debated?”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          “I understand how that would make you hesitate before getting the vaccine. I personally investigated this lawsuit. The lawsuit alleges that Pfizer concealed information about the vaccine causing pregnancy issues, such as miscarriages, and heart problems.<sup>47-49</sup> However, there is no evidence to support these claims.<sup>49</sup> Pfizer is now running a 5-year clinical trial to better understand people who got</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p>vaccine-associated heart problems, a rare side effect affecting 2-20 per 100,000 people.<sup>50,51</sup> I will continue monitoring this lawsuit and if I become concerned, I will update all patients.</p> <p>Safety and efficacy may vary from person to person. However, safety also varies from person to person when you are sick with Covid. Covid-19 has higher rates of complications and death when someone is unvaccinated. In the meantime, would you be more comfortable getting a Covid-19 vaccine not from Pfizer? I can see what other Covid-19 vaccines we have in stock and let you know which other pharmacies may have Covid-19 vaccines not from Pfizer.”</p>	
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## SIDE EFFECTS

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
BELL'S PALSY	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “I heard there are real cases of people developing Bell's Palsy after getting the COVID vaccine. I do not trust the vaccine after hearing about this very serious side effect.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>            “I understand how this information would cause you fear and concern. I recommend getting the Covid vaccine to help prevent catching Covid and experiencing the worst impacts of the virus that could actually put you at an increased risk for other health concerns. There have been some reports of symptoms of Bell's Palsy after COVID vaccines, but I want to reassure you that these cases are very rare. In one study of 989,144 patients, just 44 developed Bell's Palsy after vaccination.<sup>59</sup> None of the 44 cases were severe or life threatening. Also, the level of Bell's Palsy after COVID-19 vaccination was equal to that after flu vaccination before the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>60</sup> A lot of times, people already have a risk factor for Bell's Palsy, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or respiratory infections. On the off chance this side effect were to occur, it can be treated, anticipating improvement within a few weeks.”</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>
GENERAL SIDE EFFECTS	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “I've heard the side effects from the new COVID vaccine can be brutal. Seems like I'll probably feel worse and have more side effects from the vaccine than the virus</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

	<p>itself and I really can't afford to get sick right now. I don't go out much anyway, so I feel like there's a higher chance of getting sick if I get the vaccine."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          Everyone's immune system can respond differently to the vaccine and virus. So although you've heard of other people feeling really lousy after the new COVID vaccine, it doesn't necessarily mean you'll feel that way too.<sup>43</sup> It's difficult to know exactly how the COVID virus will affect you or what your chances of contracting it are, especially when new strains are circulating. Common minor side effects of the COVID vaccine are as they were with the initial vaccine, and include pain or swelling at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle aches, and fever, but these side effects usually only last a day or two.<sup>44</sup> Some people also don't experience any side effects. Some people have an allergic reaction to the ingredients in vaccines, and you shouldn't get the updated COVID shot if you had an allergic reaction to a previous COVID vaccine.<sup>44</sup> But if you did not have a bad reaction to a previous dose, I recommend you get the updated vaccine to protect you from potentially being out sick for a longer period of time with the COVID virus. We can schedule your vaccination for a day you do not have a lot of obligations and can take it easy.</p>	
<p>MYOCARDITIS OR HEART PROBLEMS</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "A friend of mine got the vaccine a couple months ago and is now getting random chest pain. I've heard a lot of people say that the vaccine might cause heart problems in people and my friend's chest pain is making me think that's true. I don't want the vaccine if I'm going to develop heart problems as well."</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>"I heard on the news that there was a young man, an athlete in good health, who died, and they thought his death was caused by the vaccine. It seems like the vaccine is pretty risky."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I have also heard about heart problems and recently read a study that showed that the risk of having heart problems was actually higher from getting COVID than from</p>	<p><u>PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</u></p>

	<p>getting the vaccine. That means people actually have lower risk of heart problems if they get the vaccine.”<sup>8</sup></p> <p>“There have been very rare cases of different kinds of heart inflammation associated with the COVID vaccine, mainly among adolescents and young adult males. There are many more cases of patients with long COVID reporting chest pain and other heart-related symptoms. Considering that, getting the COVID vaccine is the best way of keeping you healthy and living a productive life.”</p>	
HEARING ISSUES	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>  “I saw online that some people have problems with their hearing after getting the COVID vaccine. I don’t want to risk having a loud whooshing and ringing sound in my ears for the rest of my life.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>  “I keep up with safety data for vaccines and I heard about the potential for hearing issues as well. Healthcare providers can report when people notice adverse effects that they think are due to the vaccine, which allows us to stay updated on any emerging concerns about the vaccine. After looking into it more, the studies I read concluded there isn’t enough evidence to say that the vaccine causes hearing changes or loss.<sup>52</sup> However, the studies have found that viral infections themselves can cause damage to the ears, causing hearing loss.<sup>53,54</sup> This means that the Covid virus itself could potentially cause hearing loss.<sup>55</sup> Getting COVID-19 and being unvaccinated can be very serious. There is a high risk of hospitalization and complications from the virus without vaccination.<sup>56</sup> I recommend that you get the vaccine to reduce your risk of hospitalization and long Covid.”</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>
STROKE	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>  “I read somewhere that getting the vaccine increases my risk of getting a stroke. I don’t think I want to risk that just to get vaccinated against COVID.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b></p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

“When the Pfizer vaccine was first released, there were some concerns mainly about the Pfizer vaccine increasing the risk of stroke. After years of studying the vaccine and stroke, studies show there is no link between the COVID-19 vaccine and stroke.<sup>16</sup> In fact, studies have shown that having COVID-19 increases your risk of stroke,<sup>17</sup> so I would urge you to get the vaccine to protect yourself from that possibility!”

## YEARLY VACCINE

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
<p>WHY AN ANNUAL VACCINATION</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “Why do I need to get a vaccine every year? I don’t even get the flu shot every year, so I don’t think I need the COVID vaccine either.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>            “Getting a vaccine every year increases immunity to the virus and is a great way to protect yourself and your loved ones this season. The flu and COVID-19 continually mutate and generate variants. The vaccines try to target the most common variant to help protect you from getting infected.”</p> <p>“I understand that you don’t get the flu shot, but getting either or both will make it more likely that you’ll have a healthier winter since you’ll be more likely to have protection against the current version of the virus.”<sup>18</sup></p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>PROTECTION AGAINST NEW VARIANTS</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>            “I’ve heard about all these different variants of COVID, and it seems like every year there’s a new type. If I’m going to get a COVID shot every year, how do I know it’s going to protect me against whatever variant is out there right now?”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>            “That’s a good question that many other people have too. The best way to slow new variants from emerging is to slow the spread of the virus, and the best way to slow the spread is to get vaccinated. With the two recent variants Delta and Omicron, we saw that the COVID vaccines were effective in reducing transmission and the risk of</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

severe illness, hospitalization, and [death](#).<sup>24</sup> Each year health experts work together to identify the variant that is most likely to be circulating in the fall and then they develop the vaccine to target that variant. Health officials say the new COVID vaccines are a much closer match to currently circulating variants than prior vaccines and they are still a close match, and will offer protection against, all other current and newer [strains](#).”<sup>25</sup>

## VACCINE BELIEFS

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
<p>THE VACCINE IS INEFFECTIVE</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> "I don't think the vaccine does anything. I know so many people who got the vaccine and then got COVID. It obviously doesn't work and they're just injecting whatever they want into us."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> "The vaccine increases your body's ability to fight off COVID and decreases the likelihood that you would be hospitalized due to COVID-19. People who get the vaccine can still get COVID but the severity of their symptoms is usually much less than those who did not get vaccinated. Studies have shown that people who get vaccinated are less likely to get COVID, be hospitalized from COVID, or die from COVID."<sup>7</sup></p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>MRNA VACCINES CHANGE YOUR DNA</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> "I'm nervous about this mRNA vaccine. I've heard it changes your DNA and I'm afraid that if my DNA changes, I won't make it into heaven."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> "I've heard others who are concerned that the vaccine will change their DNA, but I can assure you that is not possible. Most of the vaccines are mRNA vaccines. Your cells constantly make mRNA on their own. mRNA acts as a messenger within your cells, carrying genetic information from one part of your cell to another. The mRNA in the vaccines does not interact with your DNA, so it can't change your DNA. The mRNA in the vaccines direct your cells to make the type of protein found on the virus, so your immune system learns to recognize that protein and respond effectively. Researchers have been studying vaccines using mRNA for decades, so</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p>we know a lot about how they work and that they are safe.<sup>33</sup> If the thought of getting an mRNA vaccine still makes you nervous, there is a more traditional protein vaccine called Novavax that is available now. We could look into where that is available if that sounds more appealing to you."</p>	
<p>MY DOCTOR SHOULD DO THE VACCINATION</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "I feel like my doctor should be the one to give me and my children vaccines. I'm not convinced pharmacies are giving me the same stuff my doctor does."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I know getting vaccines in pharmacies is a pretty recent change – I used to get all my vaccines at the doctor's office too. However, I can assure you that both pharmacies and doctors' offices receive their vaccines from the same source. A lot of people find it's more convenient to get vaccinated at a pharmacy. Pharmacists are highly trained to administer vaccines and are mandated by law to maintain certain qualifications to give vaccines."<sup>28</sup></p> <p>"Also, pharmacies have provided over 270 million COVID vaccinations, which is more than half of all COVID vaccinations given in the US.<sup>29</sup> Getting vaccinated by your doctor is a good option too, but it has been documented that pharmacies have been the main source of the vaccine for millions of Americans."</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>VACCINES MAKE YOU SICK/GIVE YOU COVID</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "More people have been getting sick since vaccination started. I think it's the vaccines that are causing the disease."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "This is a common belief, but I can assure you the COVID vaccine cannot give you Covid. The vaccines just teach your body to recognize the coronavirus by introducing an inactive piece of the virus.<sup>30</sup> Then, if you are exposed to coronavirus later on, your body will recognize it and be able to fight it off faster. Since the vaccines cause your immune system to respond, it's normal to have side effects from the vaccine that feel like COVID symptoms, such as fatigue and fever. But those vaccine side effects vary and should only last 1-3 days;<sup>31</sup> you won't have COVID itself. Something to keep in mind is that it can take a couple of weeks for the vaccine to become effective, so it is possible to get COVID sometime in the week or two after getting vaccinated, but I assure you it won't be from the vaccine."</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p><b>If patient asks about the vaccine causing variants:</b>  “New variants happen because the virus goes through a natural, ongoing process of mutation, change, which happens the more the virus spreads.<sup>27</sup> Getting vaccinated helps slow new variants from developing since the vaccines have been shown to reduce the ability of the virus to spread between people.”<sup>24</sup></p>	
FINANCIAL CONCERNS	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>  “Why is my insurance being charged if the vaccine is supposed to be free?”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>  “Up until Fall 2023, the government had paid for all Covid vaccines and provided them for free to anyone, regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay. However, Covid vaccines have now transitioned to the commercial market, which means the government is no longer paying. Instead, how vaccines are paid for and whether they are covered by insurance will now be determined by insurance market rules and regulations. Fortunately, most people with insurance will still be able to get the vaccine for free.”<sup>34</sup></p> <p><b>Patient Concern:</b>  “I don’t have health insurance so I don’t think I could afford the vaccine.”</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>  “You may be able to obtain a free vaccine through your local health department or nearby health clinics. Try calling your local health department to find out what your options are. You can find a local health department <a href="#">HERE</a>. There are also health centers across the country that provide vaccines to patients and adjust their fees based on income and family size. You can find a health center near you <a href="#">HERE</a>. There is also the Vaccines for Children, VFC, program<sup>61</sup> that provides vaccines at no cost to eligible children through healthcare providers enrolled in the program.”</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>
YOUNG AND HEALTHY, VACCINE NOT NEEDED	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>  “I’m young and in perfect health. I got COVID before and it wasn’t that bad. Why get vaccinated against something that’s mild and my body can fight off naturally?”</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

**Pharmacist Response:**

"I'm glad to hear you're feeling healthy! A lot of people your age gets vaccinated to protect other less healthy people in the community, like grandparents or people who have autoimmune diseases or cancer. COVID carries a much greater risk for these folks. While COVID symptoms may be mild for you, you could spread COVID to others who are high-risk. Also, perfectly healthy people like you have gotten seriously sick with COVID and have found it [difficult to recover](#). If you don't get vaccinated for you, I'd encourage you to do so to protect others who aren't so healthy."

## MISTRUST ISSUES

CONCERN	EXAMPLE PATIENT CONCERN & SUGGESTED PHARMACIST RESPONSE	PATIENT HANDOUTS
MONEYMAKING SCHEMES	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b> "I don't trust these big pharmaceutical companies. The new booster is all just a money-making scheme for Pfizer and Moderna to make more money at the expense of the patient."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b> "I understand where you're coming from. While Pfizer and Moderna do make a profit from the COVID vaccines, it is not a scheme because it's for a health product they must make changes to. They make money from it the same way they make money from other treatments, such as antibiotics and cancer drugs. Your immunity to COVID from previous vaccine doses or from an infection with the virus lessens over time, especially as new COVID variants arise. Getting vaccinated every year increases your immunity to the virus and targets the most current variant to help better protect you. That is why they make and recommend a new booster. If you have insurance, you probably won't have to pay for it. But even if you don't have insurance, you can get it for free through the Bridge Access Program."</p> <p>[if your pharmacy can provide the vaccine for free, let them know. If not, free COVID vaccines are available at federally qualified health centers and thousands of retail pharmacies participating in the Bridge Access Program].</p>	<a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a>

<p>GOVERNMENT OVERREACH</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "I don't think the government should be able to tell us to get the vaccine. It's my body and I want to decide what goes in it."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I completely understand. If you do not work in a government job, it is not a requirement, but for the sake of your health and wellbeing, I definitely encourage you to get it. I would not suggest doing anything that would harm you or your long-term health. Are there any specific concerns about the vaccine that you have?"</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>GOVERNMENT CONTROL</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "The CDC, the WHO, and the government are using the vaccine to control people. Now, so many people are dying suddenly after getting the vaccine. I don't want any part in that. "</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I've heard other people express this concern. Millions of people, including me, have gotten the vaccine, and not experienced negative consequences or died. The vaccine's benefits in protecting people against severe COVID symptoms and hospitalizations make the vaccine worth considering.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>Note: It can be really difficult to talk through this kind of situation with a patient, especially because they have animosity towards traditional data sources and research. It's important to bring the conversation to a more individual level and speak just about your perspective as a provider and what you hope for them as your patient.</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENTATION</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "The government is using this to experiment on people. I feel like this is a way for the government to begin crowd control like they do in Japan. They want to create environments where they minimize Black people in the United States."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I definitely want to acknowledge what you said about the government running experiments on people in the past. That is true. The thing that is different about the</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

	<p>COVID vaccine is that people of all races in every country have gotten it. And those who have gotten the vaccine are less likely to die from COVID than people who have not gotten vaccinated. The vaccine was not specifically geared toward one race; it was developed to be given to anyone. To keep you safe from COVID, I highly recommend it."</p>	
<p>MICROCHIPS IN THE VACCINE</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "I've heard a lot of talk about microchips being in the COVID vaccines as a way for the government to keep tabs on all of us. Then, two weeks after my daughter got the vaccine, she was stopped at airport security because her left arm was setting the alarm off! I'm sure it's the microchip they put in there."</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I've heard this too, but as someone who gives plenty of vaccines, I can tell you this isn't possible for several reasons: 1) the microchip would be too large to fit through the tiny hole in the needle, 2) the microchip would require a power source to transmit a signal, and 3) it would have to transmit a signal through an inch of muscle and fat and skin to a remote device. <a href="#">It's not possible for a microchip to work in this way.</a>"</p> <p>"Also, there are no metals in COVID vaccines or any ingredients that can produce an electromagnetic field, so the vaccine doesn't make you magnetic."</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>
<p>FACT CHECKERS FUNDED BY VACCINE COMPANIES</p>	<p><b>Patient Concern:</b>          "These covid-19 vaccine fact-checkers are being funded by vaccine companies. Why should I trust the information out there, when these corporations are clearly profiting from them?"</p> <p><b>Pharmacist Response:</b>          "I understand your concern. You want accurate information from a source that does not have an agenda or wants to make a profit. One fact checker I found which does not accept any funding or involvement from vaccine companies is <a href="https://factcheck.org/covid-misconceptions/">factcheck.org/covid-misconceptions/</a>.<sup>45</sup> The fact checker also includes a breakdown of the current funding they receive, as well as past funding, such as the APPC Endowment and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.<sup>46</sup> The website also goes into detail about how the organization fact checks articles, under "Our Process" in the "About Us" section, so you can be assured you are receiving</p>	<p><a href="#">PATIENT CONCERN AND PHARMACIST RESPONSE</a></p>

accurate information. If you want to review the information on the factchecker, I can speak with you at a later time so we can discuss why I recommend the vaccine.”

If patient is not comfortable using the internet, show them the above website if you have time.