

MDH Offers Tips and Strategies for Holiday COVID-19 Vaccine Conversations

Full-page newspaper ads across the state will help Minnesotans discuss vaccines with their loved ones

Minnesotans looking for ways to have productive – rather than divisive – holiday gathering discussions over COVID-19 vaccines can find helpful conversation tips in their Thanksgiving Day newspapers this week.

The Minnesota Department of Health has reserved a full-page advertisement in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, St. Paul Pioneer Press, Mankato Free Press, St. Cloud Times, Mesabi Tribune, and Winona Daily News offering strategies for talking about the COVID-19 vaccine with friends and family members during the holiday season.

For some Minnesotans, these conversation guides will be waiting outside their front door on Thanksgiving morning: the newspaper delivery bags themselves will direct readers to the conversation guide inside the paper.

MDH is also launching a website – [COVID-19 vaccine conversations](#) – where Minnesotans can find the discussion tips.

“As Minnesotans get ready to gather with family and friends this holiday season, don’t shy away from talking about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine. Your perspective and positive example might be what helps a reluctant family member or friend roll up their sleeves and get their shot,” said Governor Tim Walz. “By having real conversations with the people who matter the most to you, you can help someone decide to get a life-saving COVID-19 vaccine this holiday season.”

Research shows that, among unvaccinated Americans, families and friends can serve as important advocates for the COVID-19 vaccine when they share their positive experience getting their shot. (See [Vaccine Monitor: Some Who Were Hesitant to Get a Vaccine in January Say They Changed Their Mind Because of Family, Friends and Their Personal Doctors](#))

“As someone who has lost a loved one to COVID-19, my holiday wish is for all Minnesotans to take this virus seriously and get vaccinated. Many of our unvaccinated family members or

friends are waiting for a little nudge to decide to get their shot – and hearing from people they love might be just what it takes to convince them,” said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. “It might not be easy to talk about the COVID-19 vaccine while gathering this holiday season. But these helpful tips can lead you to have productive, positive conversations about the value of getting the shot.”

“Holiday gatherings give us the opportunity to tell our loved ones we care – and this year, that means encouraging our unvaccinated friends and family to roll up their sleeves and get their COVID-19 vaccine,” said Department of Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm. “We know these conversations aren’t easy. But there are simple ways to have empathetic conversations that could help more Minnesotans learn information about the COVID-19 vaccine, and ultimately decide it’s time to get their shot.”

Minnesotans can follow six simple suggestions for talking about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- Start from a place of care
- Listen to concerns with empathy
- Use open-ended questions to explore opinions
- Ask permission to share information
- Help loved ones find reasons to get vaccinated through shared values
- Help make their vaccine happen