

How to Counter Vaccine Misinformation with Patients



Misinformation on social media and other channels can affect vaccine confidence. As trusted messengers, health care providers are essential in helping patients find and follow reliable, evidence-based information.



Follow the steps below to learn how to counter false information.



USE AN EMPATHETIC, COLLABORATIVE, AND CONCISE APPROACH

Build trust so patients are more likely to follow your guidance instead of misinformation.

- Listen to concerns and provide clear, simple information.
- Share your own experience with vaccination when appropriate.
- Be friendly and respectful—avoid arguing, judging, or shaming.
- Focus on shared goals, such as keeping patients, families, and the community healthy and safe.



KNOW THE SOURCE OF MISINFORMATION

- To address misinformation, first understand where it comes from and how it spreads.
- Identify gaps in your patients' knowledge and listen to misinformation circulating in your community through social and traditional media.

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IDENTIFY FACTUAL INFORMATION

- Avoid repeating myths, as this can reinforce them. For example, instead of repeating "Flu vaccines make people sick," explain that mild side effects can happen and mean the body is building protection.
- Be honest about what is known and unknown, explain side effects clearly, and share trusted resources and expert websites.



PREVENT AND ADDRESS MISINFORMATION

- Work with community groups to create health messages for the people they serve.
- Staff should also be trained to address misinformation and consider patients' different backgrounds, needs, and concerns.



PROVIDE INFORMATION AND FOLLOW UP

- Provide clear, accurate vaccine information through office visits, your website, social media, and other trusted channels where patients seek health information.
- Keep the conversation going. If a patient declines vaccination, revisit the discussion at future appointments.

For more information, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/4eWDXHO

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