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Please copy and distribute to ALL physicians at your location.

Addressing misconceptions of COVID-19 Vaccines

In an effort to mitigate myths and misconceptions regarding COVID-19 vaccines, Ventura County Public Health has compiled the following information to assist primary care providers in making informed decisions with their patients and to act as advocates to combat further disease transmission in the community.

Legitimate Contraindications to COVID-19 Vaccines

- Severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine
- Immediate allergic reaction of any severity (hives, swollen lips, etc.) to a previous dose* or physician-diagnosed allergy to a component of the vaccine (polysorbate in Janssen vaccine and polyethylene glycol in the mRNA vaccines).

(*A recent article in JAMA may lead to the removal of this contraindication: [Matthew S. Krantz, MD¹](#); [Jason H. Kwah, MD, MSCI²](#); [Cosby A. Stone Jr, MD, MPH¹](#); et al, Safety Evaluation of the Second Dose of Messenger RNA COVID-19 Vaccines in Patients With Immediate Reactions to the First Dose, July 26, 2021. 159 people who had immediate reactions to their first doses of an mRNA vaccine were given a second dose. 32 had either self-limited, mild and/or reactions that were treated with and responded to antihistamines.)

Reasons to Postpone a COVID-19 Vaccination (but still get it)

- People with current SARS-CoV-2 infection should be postponed until the person has recovered from the acute illness (if the person had symptoms) and at least 10 days have gone by since their diagnosis
- Moderate or severe acute illness with or without fever is a precaution to administration of all vaccines (until recovery from acute symptoms)

Not Good Reasons to Avoid COVID-19 Vaccine

- Allergic reactions (including severe) not related to vaccines such as reactions to food, pets, insect venom, environmental allergies, latex allergy or allergies to oral medications
- History of Guillain Barre Syndrome is not a contraindication to immunization against COVID-19
- A previous physical exam (one is not needed in order to get the vaccine)
- Currently on antibiotics
- Recovering from an illness, including 10 days after COVID
- Recent exposure to an infectious disease
- History of penicillin allergy, relatives with allergies, or receiving allergen extract immunotherapy
- Heart disease
- An immunocompromising condition, specifically cancer, solid organ transplant, autoimmune/rheumatic disease and hemodialysis (these vaccines are not live virus vaccines)
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure

Common misconceptions regarding COVID-19 Vaccine

- <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/featured-topic/covid-19-vaccine-myths-debunked>
- https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/public_health/COVID19-Vaccine-Myths.pdf

Recommendations for Medical Providers

- Assess patients for individual misconceptions regarding COVID-19 vaccines.
- Discuss patients fears and risks regarding COVID-19 vaccines.
- Provide education regarding true risks and benefits of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Collaborate with patients to make informed decisions regarding COVID-19 vaccination.

This bulletin is intended to improve the public health in our county by keeping physicians and nurses informed of noteworthy diagnoses, disease trends and other events of medical interest. Another goal of a public health department is to educate. We hope that you will use this information to increase your awareness. Please allow us to continue in our role of speaking to the press so that we may maximize the educational message to the benefit of all citizens of Ventura County.

Public Health Communicable Disease Office

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