

**COVID-19 VACCINE EDUCATION INITIATIVE  
OMICRON & BOOSTER SHOT MESSAGING BRIEF**

(Updated Jan 2022)

**AUDIENCE SNAPSHOT**

- As of January 2022, roughly 40% of vaccinated adults have already received their booster shot – and another 30-35% report they “definitely” or “probably” will receive a booster shot.
- However, roughly 25% of vaccinated adults are on the fence about booster shots. This group is largely persuadable, with only about 5% of vaccinated adults being opposed to receiving a booster shot.
- This core audience of “unsure” adults is mostly under age 45 and also skews female.

**OMICRON IMPACT**

- Among those who are vaccinated, awareness and concern about Omicron is high and may be motivating some vaccinated adults to get a booster dose. Half of vaccinated adults who have not yet received a booster dose (27% of all vaccinated adults) say the news about the new omicron variant makes them more likely to get a booster.<sup>1</sup>
- 93% of vaccinated adults believe booster shots are important to protect against new variants in general (including 70% who say they believe they are “very important”).
- On the other hand, unvaccinated adults remain relatively unmoved by the recent news of the omicron variant with a large majority of unvaccinated adults (87%) saying the news about the omicron variant does not make them more likely to get vaccinated.<sup>2</sup>
- In terms of mask wearing, roughly 60% of the general public reports they are more likely to wear a mask in indoor public settings because of the Omicron variant.

**NEW/GROWING BARRIERS**

- COVID-19 news fatigue causing many to tune out new information. It’s important to break through without being overly alarmist or using fear tactics.
- Uncertainty about the safety of COVID booster shots, even if someone has already been vaccinated.
- Younger adults (< 45) don’t always see themselves as high risk for getting seriously ill from COVID.
- In general, there’s less urgency among young adults to get a booster shot.
- Breakthrough cases can raise doubts and increase reluctance.

**PRIORITY MESSAGES**

<b>#1: New Variants Are Serious</b>	<b>#2: Get Protected</b>	<b>#3: Slow The Spread</b>
<p><b>New variants are much more infectious than the original COVID-19 virus.</b></p> <p>We’re not fighting the same virus from 2020, and we need to take these new variants seriously.</p>	<p><b>Being up-to-date with your vaccines and booster shots helps keep you out of the hospital.</b></p> <p>Health experts recommend that everyone get a booster shot at the appropriate time.</p>	<p><b>Even if you’re vaccinated – the data is clear that masks make it harder for new variants to spread.</b></p> <p>If you’re in an indoor public setting, please do your best to wear a mask and help keep yourself and other people safe.</p>

**WEBSITE CALL TO ACTION**

- URL: [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://www.getvaccineanswers.org) or [DeTiDepende.org](https://www.detidepende.org)
- CTA: Get the latest information at [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://www.getvaccineanswers.org).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-early-omicron-update/>

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### GUIDING MESSAGING PRINCIPLES

- Don't be alarmist – lead with the “new” news (such as new variants or local hospitalization rates) to break through, but don't play into fear tactics. People will be protected if they follow the recommended steps.
- Emphasize how new variants are what's driving the changing guidance and recommendation for boosters.
- Acknowledge that new variants have led to more breakthrough cases – but that the vaccines still provide ample protection against serious illness. If you're not vaccinated, you're at least 10X more likely to die.
- Ideal tone is empathetic, authentic, and respectful if people have questions or concerns.
- Acknowledge that there is a lot of information on COVID-19 and the vaccines, then point them to the latest, clear information.
- Build trust by being honest and transparent where appropriate.
- When sharing a key message, provide a reason to believe (e.g. stat, fact) when possible.

### MESSAGES TO AVOID

- Positioning getting a vaccine as “the right thing to do”.
- Avoid language around “getting back to moments missed” due to current state of pandemic.
- Overpromising that getting a vaccine will “flip the switch” and end the pandemic.
- Avoid playing into fear tactics or trying to make it seem like things are the worst they've ever been.

### CONSUMER FACING LANGUAGE

<b>Do Say</b>	<b>Don't Say</b>
People who have questions	Anti-vaxxers
Get the latest information	There are things we still don't know
Protect yourself, your loved ones, and those who are most vulnerable	Protect your community or country
Public health	Government
Medical experts and doctors	Scientists

### TRUSTED MESSENGERS

- **Medical experts and community health providers** are generally the most trusted sources, especially during times when new information about variants is coming out quickly.
- **Celebrities** aren't always the best messengers, but can help by amplifying support, sharing why they got vaccinated, or giving a platform to medical experts to help share educational information.
- **Public health institutions** like CDC or FDA still carry credibility, but it can also sometimes be more effective to focus on trusted medical experts within specific communities.