



The CEO of HIGHER HEALTH, Dr (Prof) Ramneek Ahluwalia answers eight commonly asked questions about the COVID-19 vaccine #VacciNation



The Post School Education and Training Sector (PSET) is rolling out the COVID-19 vaccination programme, which is aligned to the national vaccination effort led by the Department of Health in its age-determined approach.

“It is imperative that everyone who is eligible takes up the chance to get the jab. Vaccines we have in South Africa are proven to be effective and safe. There is a fundamental need to address the myths, fake news, misinformation and misconceptions around vaccination.” – Minister Dr Blade Nzimande

We urge all eligible staff and students to be vaccinated and help us encourage and enable others to do so.



1

Why should you be vaccinated?



The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends you get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as one is available to you. You should be vaccinated to protect yourself and to protect those around you.

Great news is that vaccines give near-complete protection against severe illness and dying from COVID. Data indicates that an unvaccinated 50-year old has about the same chance of dying from COVID as a vaccinated 80-year old. Life insurance companies are starting to look at vaccine hesitancy as they look at smoking – a self-realised but preventable risky behaviour. Vaccines that are approved for use in South Africa are able to reduce the spread of infection between people. Each person that is vaccinated can save many more lives.

If you are nervous about allergy or other side effects, speak to a health professional who will be able to give you details of the stringent protocols for monitoring and managing any possible adverse events – which are uncommon.

2

What is the consequence of people staying unvaccinated?

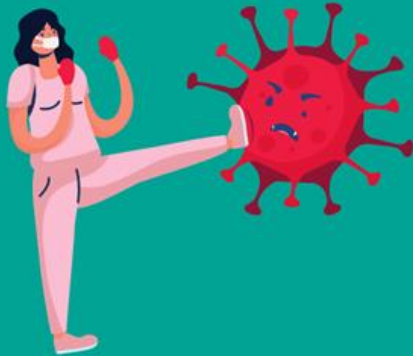
Vaccine hesitancy is a problem worldwide. Although nearly 4 billion COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in 180 countries to date, it still isn't enough to end the pandemic.

Unvaccinated people are a risk both to themselves and to everyone else. By staying unvaccinated, they enable the virus to spread and mutate – possibly into more infectious and deadlier variants. The virus has less of a chance of mutating in the body of a vaccinated person.



3

Why should we all be vaccinated?



COVID-19 vaccines are our best bet to control the pandemic and realise the possibilities of stopping lockdowns, opening the economy and again being able to resume the activities we love – attend lectures with friends, visit family, go for a night out, enjoy sports.

Evidence indicates that vaccinated individuals are much less likely to spread COVID-19 to others. The virus can only replicate and mutate inside a human host.

Mass vaccinations help reduce the pressure on our health system: firstly by being vaccinated, we protect our health workers and secondly, we allow them to help patients with other conditions.

4

Can I get infected after having the vaccine?

Some fully vaccinated people might still get COVID because no vaccine is 100% effective at preventing infection or stopping transmission of a virus. These are known as 'breakthrough' infections which are typically mild to moderate cases which do not require hospitalisation or ICU admission.



5

How do I sign up and find a vaccine site?



Details:



1. Self-Registration Web portal:
<https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za>
2. USSD: Dial *134*832*ID Number# (No ID? – Just Dial *134*832#)
3. WhatsApp Portal: Send word "REGISTER" to 060 012 3456 on WhatsApp
4. Toll-free hotline: Call 0800 029 999
5. Once you are registered on EVDS, find your nearest vaccination site from the list of 2000 sites that has been sent to your Institutional Head
6. On the day you go for your vaccination, remember to carry your identity document or passport, together with some form of identification that confirms you are a staff representative from a PSET institution

6

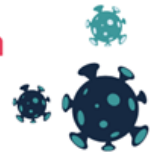
What should I do until I and those around me are fully vaccinated?

Continue to sanitise, maintain 2m physical distance, wear your mask and keep windows open when indoors. It takes two weeks following the second vaccine dose of Pfizer vaccine, or three weeks after the J&J jab to be fully immunised so consider this when making decisions about interacting with people.



7

What are the common side effects after a COVID-19 vaccination?



- Pain, redness and swelling around vaccinated area
- Tiredness, Headache, Muscle pain, Chills, Fever, Nausea

If symptoms worsen after 24 hours consult your doctor or healthcare worker.

8

If I have the flu or a cold, or COVID-19 how long should I wait before I get vaccinated?



For a cold or flu, you should wait 15 days from the last day of your symptoms.

For a COVID-19 positive case (laboratory PCR confirmed case), you should wait 30 days from the last day of your symptoms.



HIGHER HEALTH



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