



National
Congress of
American
Indians



THIS IS YOUR
SHOT

COVID-19 NATIVE YOUTH VACCINATION TOOLKIT

Updated August 2021



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This toolkit was developed by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) using information gathered from Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This toolkit is intended to provide American Indian and Alaska Natives access to factual information about COVID-19 vaccines and to provide additional resources.

This toolkit also includes social media graphics and sample posts that may be shared with families, friends, schools, communities, organizations, Tribal Nations, and other networks.

COVID-19 is a constantly evolving virus, especially with the prevalence of new variants. Please check the [CDC's COVID-19 webpage](#) for the latest information, guidance, and resources.



Why get vaccinated? | Native Youth Ages 12-24 Years



Vaccines (shots) are one of the tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and are widely accessible.

GETTING VACCINATED IS:

- Easy
- Safe
- Free

Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at keeping you from preventing you COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. These vaccines cannot give you the disease itself.



THE VACCINES ARE SAFE. The U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used in the U.S. have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years. The CDC and IHS have systems in place to watch for safety issues across the country to make sure the vaccines stay safe.



Why get vaccinated? | Native Youth Ages 12-24 Years

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted many communities across the nation. These impacts were made worse in Indian Country due to lack of infrastructure, health disparities, and chronic underfunding of programs. Since the end of July, the Delta variant accounted for over 83% of all new COVID-19 cases in the U.S. and is the predominant strain circulating in states served by all 12 IHS regions.

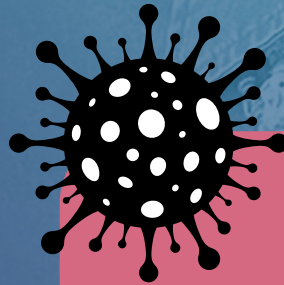
Stopping the pandemic requires using all available tools. Wearing masks, frequent handwashing, and physical distancing are important, but vaccines are now available for those ages 12 years and older.

GETTING A COVID-19 VACCINE IS EASY, SAFE, AND FREE. Native youth vaccinations are a critical step toward protecting our communities, ending the pandemic, and getting life back to normal.

Tribal Nations across the U.S. are relying on Native youth to step up as the next generation and become the future leaders of Indian Country - to preserve our history, our culture, and our beliefs.

It takes a collective effort to preserve the health and safety of our communities. Every shot matters, and every individual vaccination is progress with another life protected, another community more safe, and another step toward putting this pandemic behind us.

This is your shot to learn about the COVID-19 vaccine and make the best decision for yourself, your family, and your Tribal Nation.



THE DATA IS CLEAR:

If you are fully vaccinated, you have a high level of protection from known variants, including Delta, severe illness, and death from COVID-19.



"I got vaccinated because it's the best way to protect myself and members of my community from hospitalization and death."

**- Nick Courtney
Makah Citizen**

Why get vaccinated? | Native Youth Ages 12-24 Years

Because millions of people are getting vaccinated, the country is moving back to doing the things we love, like playing sports and going to concerts again. According to a recent report, the pace at which the country is being vaccinated has saved more than 100,000 lives and prevented up to 450,000 hospitalizations.¹ This is your shot to help get things back to normal.

THIS IS YOUR SHOT TO GET VACCINATED...

FOR YOUR FUTURE

Young and healthy people can get very sick, too— and vaccination can mean the difference between life and death. The data is clear: If you are fully vaccinated, you have a high level of protection from severe illness and death from COVID-19. This is your shot to ensure you have a future of representing your community well.

TO HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

When young people get sick, those around them can get sick, too. This virus can even be spread BEFORE you have symptoms, and new data shows the Delta variant is different from past versions of the virus— it is much more contagious. Our communities are the foundation on which we can begin to heal our country— think of your family, friends, and neighbors. This is your shot to protect yourself and your loved ones.

TO GET BACK ON THE TRAIL

People who have been fully vaccinated can do things they had stopped doing because of the pandemic. However, in areas with high numbers of COVID-19 cases, it's important to still consider wearing a mask when in crowded outdoor settings and for activities that consist of close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated. This is your shot to reconnect with loved ones at social and cultural gatherings.

FOR YOUR TEAM

Everyone has a team, whether it be your sports team, your co-workers, or your family. We've all heard the old cliché: there's no "I" in "team." Get vaccinated to help those that rely on you. This is your shot to be a good teammate.



Accessing the Vaccine

Protecting yourself, your loved ones and community has never been easier. Every person in the country ages **12 years old and older** is eligible to get vaccinated and vaccines are free. However, parental consent requirements for the COVID-19 vaccine can vary by state. Contact your local **IHS clinic, doctor's office, or pharmacy** to inquire about your opportunity to get vaccinated.



¹ "Deaths and Hospitalizations Averted by Rapid U.S. Vaccination Rollout," Deaths & Hospitalizations Averted by Rapid US Vaccination Rollout | Commonwealth Fund, July 7, 2021.

<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2021/jul/deaths-and-hospitalizations-averted-rapid-us-vaccination-rollout>.

Why get vaccinated? | Native Youth Ages 12-24 Years

FOR YOUR EDUCATION

Schools are safe, stimulating, and enriching places for everyone to learn. Families, schools, and communities must work together to ensure students can safely remain physically together in school, where they need to be. This is your shot to get vaccinated and return to your different groups and clubs, face-to-face instruction, and ensure you can graduate in person.

FOR YOUR ELDERS

Among the most vulnerable to COVID-19 are our tribal elders, who serve as honored links to tradition and customs passed down throughout generations. The efforts to protect elders is more than about saving lives, but also about saving the unique knowledge of language and history they possess. This is your shot to protect your community elders and irreplaceable pieces of your culture.



FOR INDIAN COUNTRY

As the future generations of tribal leaders and advocates, this is your shot to stand together and be a unified voice in getting our people vaccinated. The numbers show that Indian Country is a leader in the effort to get America vaccinated, but there's still work to do. Encourage your family and friends to get vaccinated for the future of Native people.



Takeaway ▶▶▶▶

GETTING VACCINATED CAN HELP PROTECT YOU AND THOSE YOU LOVE.

The quicker everyone gets vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to doing the things we love, like playing sports, hanging out with friends, and spending time with family. Vaccines are accessible to you. This is your shot to help Indian Country. You are the next generation and your community needs you healthy and safe.



Parents of Native Youth

THIS IS YOUR SHOT TO BRING HEALTH AND SAFETY BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

More than 1.5 million vaccine doses have been distributed across the Indian health system by IHS since vaccines started arriving in mid-December 2020, and we understand that IHS remains committed to vaccine availability for all individuals within its health system.

Getting vaccinated is the most reliable way to protect your family. With more than 100,000 American lives saved and 450,000 hospitalizations prevented, vaccination is our hope for the future. Getting America vaccinated is a community-based effort, and tribal communities are the foundation of the path forward to healing our country.

VACCINES IN INDIAN COUNTRY:

Vaccines administered at IHS-operated facilities, tribal health programs, and urban Indian organizations receiving the vaccine through the IHS jurisdiction as of August 5, 2021:

Total doses administered: 1,499,373
People receiving at least one dose: 834,846
People Fully Vaccinated: 684,170
People 18+ Fully Vaccinated Janssen: 27,630

Being disproportionately affected by COVID-19 has led to great strides in vaccine rollouts across Indian Country in an effort to protect our people and our communities. Data has shown high IHS vaccination percentages translated into American Indian and Alaska Natives being vaccinated at leading rates across the United States. Many Tribal Nations administered rollouts of the COVID-19 vaccine to their tribal citizens quickly, which in many places allowed clinics to extend their reach and help communities at large by offering vaccines to community organizations, school districts, and the general public.

Vaccinations are available for you, your children, and your community at places you will be most often - like work, school, sporting events, summer festivals, and places of worship. **Vaccination allows for you and your children to enjoy the things you love while still feeling safe and protected.** Additionally, the Administration is working with more than 42,000 local pharmacies so individuals can get vaccinated at a convenient location, with most offering walk-in vaccinations, and mobilizing COVID-19 Surge Response Teams to provide additional support to regions that are dealing with outbreaks among the unvaccinated.



Parents of Native Youth

GETTING YOUR FAMILY VACCINATED

Thousands of Americans of all ages are dying from COVID-19 every day, nearly 4.2 million children have tested positive for COVID-19 since the pandemic onset, and many who get the virus are still feeling symptoms months later. American Indians and Alaska Natives have infection rates over 3.5 times higher than non-Hispanic whites, are over four times more likely to be hospitalized as a result of COVID-19, and have higher rates of mortality at younger ages than non-Hispanic whites.

Getting vaccinated is essential in protecting loved ones, relatives, neighbors, and anyone you come in contact with daily. Even if you aren't worried about your children getting COVID-19, they are still capable of spreading it to others who are more vulnerable, like elders and other community members. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect the health of everyone around us. This is your shot to protect your family, yourself, and the rest of Indian Country.



Vaccines are safe, accessible, and free. All COVID-19 vaccines available were tested through clinical studies involving thousands of people, including American Indians and Alaska Natives. Now, Native youth ages 12 years old and older— in every tribal community, in every corner of the U.S.— are eligible to get vaccinated. Getting vaccinated has never been easier or more convenient. Contact your local IHS clinic, doctor's office, or pharmacy to ask about opportunities to get vaccinated.

To maximize protection from COVID-19 and prevent the possibility of spreading it to others, the CDC recommends still wearing a mask in public indoor spaces if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission. In areas with high numbers of COVID-19 cases, consider wearing a mask when in crowded outdoor settings and for activities that consist of close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated.

THIS IS YOUR SHOT

COMMON CONCERNS

Accurate information is critical to combat common myths and rumors when it comes to the COVID-19 vaccine. It can be challenging to know which sources of information you can trust. Before considering vaccine information on the Internet, check that the data comes from a credible source and is up to date. Take a look at a few of the common concerns among Native youth and parents:

DOES IT AFFECT MY DNA?

Different types of vaccines offer protection in different ways, but the COVID-19 vaccine cannot affect your DNA. Both mRNA and viral vector COVID-19 vaccines deliver instructions to our cells to start building protection against the virus. However, the material never enters the cell's nucleus, which is where our DNA is kept.

DOES IT CAUSE FERTILITY ISSUES?

There is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. Additionally, there is no evidence that female or male fertility problems are a side effect of the COVID-19 vaccine.

BUT I'M YOUNG AND HEALTHY!

Although fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 than adults, all ages can still be infected with the virus and spread it to others. The CDC recommends everyone 12 years and older get a COVID-19 vaccine.

IS THE VACCINE SAFE FOR NATIVE YOUTH?

All COVID-19 vaccines used in the U.S. were tested in clinical studies with thousands of people, including American Indians and Alaska Natives. These studies were done to ensure the vaccines meet safety standards and protect people of different ages, races, and ethnicities. All authorized COVID-19 vaccines meet the same safety standards as other vaccines used in the U.S.

WILL THE VACCINE ENLARGE MY HEART?

Based on the latest evidence, myocarditis appears to be an extremely rare side effect that pales in comparison to the potential risks of COVID-19 infection.

WILL THERE BE LONG-TERM SIDE EFFECTS?

Side effects that cause long-term health problems are extremely unlikely after your COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccine monitoring has historically shown that side effects generally happen within six weeks of receiving it. The Food and Drug Administration required each of the COVID-19 vaccines to be studied for at least eight weeks after the final dose, and millions of people have been vaccinated with no long-term side effects detected.

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY HAD COVID-19 AND RECOVERED?

You should be vaccinated even if you've already had COVID-19. Experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering. Even if you have already recovered, it is possible that you could be infected with the virus again.



RESOURCES ▶▶▶▶

Your health and your family's health is important. To make the most informed decision for your healthcare needs, it is also important to consult credible, scientific sources as well as your personal healthcare provider. By being a source of wisdom in this arena and only sharing trusted sources of information based in fact, Native youth have an opportunity to become leaders within their community and encourage vaccination among others.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

This website has information on the COVID-19 situation summary, cases in the U.S., vaccine information for individuals, communities, schools, health care professionals, health departments, and more.

[View the CDC's Guidance for Tribal Communities>>](#)

World Health Organization (WHO)

This website includes situation reports from around the world as well as vaccine information including a "Vaccines Explained" series addressing vaccine safety; product-by-product vaccine information, recommendations on vaccination, and Q&A.

CLICK IMAGES TO DOWNLOAD

SOCIAL MEDIA SAMPLES

FACEBOOK

- While grappling with the loss of life and connections due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Tribal Nations now rely on Native youth to stand up as the next generation and become the future leaders of Indian Country— to preserve our history, culture, and beliefs. It's safe, easy, and free. #ThisIsYourShot to get vaccinated! Visit [vaccines.gov](#)
- Being disproportionately affected by COVID-19 has led to great strides in vaccine rollouts across Indian Country, ensuring our communities and our people are well-protected. #ThisIsYourShot for your family to be a part of that leading force! To find a COVID-19 vaccine near you, visit [vaccines.gov](#) or text your ZIP code to 438829.
- The vaccine is safe, accessible, and free. Getting vaccinated has never been easier or more convenient, and now Native youth 12 years old and older— in every tribal community, in every corner of the U.S.— are eligible. #ThisIsYourShot to contact your local IHS clinic, doctor's office, or pharmacy to inquire about opportunities to get vaccinated.

INSTAGRAM

- NATIVE YOUTH:** The numbers show that Indian Country is a leader in getting America vaccinated. As the future generations of tribal leaders and advocates, #ThisIsYourShot to stand together and be a unified voice in getting our people vaccinated— to preserve our history, culture, and beliefs.
- When young people get sick, those around them can get sick, too. Tribal elders who serve as honored links to the past are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19. The efforts to protect elders are more than about saving lives and saving the unique knowledge of language and history they possess— #ThisIsYourShot to protect irreplaceable pieces of your culture.

TWITTER

- It's up to Native youth to stand up as the next generation and become the future leaders of Indian Country— #ThisIsYourShot to preserve our history, culture, and beliefs.
- School is starting soon! #ThisIsYourShot to get back in the classroom, find your community with other Native scholars, and ensure you can get the most out of your educational experiences. Visit [vaccines.gov](#) and get vaccinated!



SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS



8.5x11 Parent Flyer



11x17 POSTER IMAGE

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