



LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO

# COVID-19 Vaccine

## Results of Resident Perception Poll

Between December 19, 2020 and January 5, 2021, FM3 Research surveyed a representative sample of San Diego County residents regarding their willingness to take the COVID-19 vaccine. Two-thirds of respondents know someone who has had COVID-19 and awareness of the vaccine is extremely broad, near universal.

### FOCUS AREAS

#### 1. Vaccine administration and locations:

- 72% of residents said they are “Likely” to take the vaccine.
- Those most hesitant to take the vaccine tend to be African Americans (36% stated unlikely to take it), those under age 50, those who are low-risk, and those that have lower levels of formal education.
- 25% of residents are consistently unlikely to take the vaccine, even after learning more.
- Residents express interest in a variety of locations for vaccination, most notably their own doctor’s office (66%), a pharmacy (41%), or a local medical clinic (33%).

#### 2. Most broadly shared concerns:

- Dangerous side effects (41%)
- “Too new” - its impacts are unknown (38%)
- Development was rushed (30%)
- Made with dangerous chemicals, toxins (30%)

Likelihood of vaccination increased with:

Income

Age

Educational  
Attainment

#### 3. Messaging:

##### Highlight a path “back to normal”

- 56% of all respondents are very convinced by a message highlighting the vaccine as a path back to normal and resuming day to day activities.
- Especially effective for African Americans and Latinos.
- Respondents under 30 are also especially convinced.

##### Emphasize safety

- 60% of respondents said knowing the vaccine will be reviewed for safety and side effects makes them more likely to take the vaccine. This was especially important for Latinos.
- Doctors, nurses and medical researchers are the most convincing messengers and should be at the forefront of communications about the vaccine.

##### Emphasize no-cost:

- 56% of residents state they were more likely to take it knowing the vaccine would be free for everyone.

##### Highlight certain facts:

- Knowing the vaccine will prevent spread, be administered by a healthcare professional and be reviewed by the FDA are the most compelling facts.

##### Key considerations:

- The right messenger is critically important (doctors, nurses, medical researchers).
- Stress that widespread vaccine participation is important to move past the current pandemic stage.
- Counter fear with facts: the vaccine has been through a rigorous scientific review process.
- Consider specific, tailored strategies to reach populations least likely to receive a vaccination.

##### Other findings around vaccine messaging:

- Latinos and 18-29 year olds are most responsive to messaging on the vaccine.
- The least effective message frames the vaccine as a path to job opportunities.
- Friends and family are trustworthy messengers for respondents of all ethnicities, including respondents of color.
- The CDC and FDA are effective messengers, but less so among African Americans.