This message is being shared with you by the Milwaukee based Refugee Community Advisory Board (RCAB)

Script:

COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine

As you know, the spread of the COVID-19 virus has resulted in many people getting sick and dying from the disease in the United States. This is a global pandemic and worldwide, over 85.2 million people have caught the disease and 1.84 million people have died.

Vaccinating as many people as possible is the only way to end this pandemic.

Without a vaccine, the pandemic could go on for two to three more years or longer.
There are two vaccines approved in the United States to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. The immune system attacks germs and helps keep us healthy.

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are two dose vaccines. This means to be fully immunized for COVID-19, each person must complete **both** doses. For the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, it is 21 days between the first and second dose. For the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, it is 28 days between the first and second dose. Your healthcare provider will give you information on when to return to receive the second dose.

   ✔ Getting the COVID-19 vaccine will help you not get the virus that causes COVID-19

   ✔ Getting the COVID-19 vaccine will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in your city, Wisconsin, this country and the world.

   ✔ Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is a safe way to help build protection.

The COVID-19 vaccine is free. Healthcare providers may charge a small fee for giving the vaccine to someone. Your health insurance most likely will cover this fee.

Who gets vaccinated first?

The COVID-19 vaccine will be delivered to certain groups first (based on their risk of getting COVID-19).

   1. Healthcare workers and long-term care facility workers and residents.

2. Essential workers and those who are over 75 years old.

3. People who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness due to underlying medical conditions and those who are over 65 years old.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. With all types of COVID-19 vaccines, the body creates a supply of cells that will remember how to fight that virus in the future.

Based trials, the two vaccines that have been approved have been shown to be safe and effective for people **16 years and older**. There are many systems in place to monitor the safety of the COVID-19 and all other vaccines

Sometimes after vaccination, the process of building immunity can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity.

The side effects from COVID-19 vaccination may feel like flu and might even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. But the COVID-19 vaccine does not make you ill with COVID-19.

In rare cases, people may have severe side effects. If someone has severe side effects immediately after their vaccine, they will be monitored by medical providers. If sometime after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine someone experiences a serious allergic reaction, they should call 911.

We strongly encourage all eligible members of our communities to get vaccinated once it's widely available.

The risk of COVID-19 and its complications far outweigh the risk of getting the vaccine.

BUT REMEMBER

The vaccine is not enough.

Even if you get the vaccine, keep wearing masks when out in public and avoid close contact with those you do not live with to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Right now it is not known **if or when** public health will stop recommending that people wear masks.

It is highly recommended that you receive the vaccine but it is not required. If you don't get vaccinated when you become eligible, you will be able to get vaccinated at another time. Now,

employers can't require employees to get vaccinated. But this could change depending on your workplace.

COVID-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet/2 meters). It spreads through respiratory droplets or small particles, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes.

Stopping a pandemic requires using **all** the tools available.

This means using the prevention tools we already know that help reduce and prevent COVID-19 transmission:

1. **Wash your hands frequently and well.**

2. **Cover your coughs and sneezes.**

3. **Wear a mask in public.**

4. **Stay 6 feet (2 meters) apart from those you do not live with.**

5. **Avoid indoor gatherings of 10 or more.**

AND a COVID-19 vaccination offers the best protection for you and others from COVID-19.

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