



COVID-19 VACCINE HESITANCY

ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE FOR PEDIATRICIANS



CONCERNS ABOUT THE SHORT AND LONG TERM EFFECTS OF VACCINES MAKE SOME PARENTS HESITANT ABOUT IMMUNIZATION

Pediatricians have a critical role in helping parents make the right decisions for their children. They also have an important role in helping adolescents make appropriate decisions for themselves.

Pediatricians who regularly interact with children and youth are uniquely positioned to discuss the risks and benefits of the COVID-19 vaccines, both for their patients and their patients' parents/caregivers. Adult caregivers who are reluctant to obtain the vaccine for themselves may not have access to their own healthcare providers to discuss concerns. Moreover, vaccine-hesitant parents and caregivers are likely to share their hesitancy with their children.

Pediatricians can bridge that gap.

We can offer our understanding of the COVID-19 vaccines to educate entire families about immunization.

Children and youth have paid a high burden from limited socialization during this pandemic. Returning to schools, camps, and other social events will be achieved when the vast majority of eligible Canadians are immunized. Health Canada has approved use of the Pfizer vaccine in children 12 years and older.

It is imperative that we actively encourage vaccination to our patients' families, both for the eligible youth and for their parents.

Achieving herd immunity, reducing circulating COVID-19 cases, and protecting vulnerable individuals (both adults and children) is best achieved by attaining a high uptake of the vaccine. Encouraging parents and our patients to receive their COVID-19 vaccines is a role that pediatricians should embrace.

We are encouraging all pediatric colleagues to include information about COVID-19 vaccines to all patients' families in the same manner that anticipatory guidance is discussed. This includes addressing caregivers' understanding of the importance of population vaccination, providing information on vaccine registration (if required), and discussing vaccine hesitancy, where it exists.

More resources can be found on the Canadian Pediatric Society website at www.cps.ca

A separate document addresses many of the concerns raised by vaccine hesitant individuals.

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